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Prolouge

"Welcome to Starclan." Applestar greeted Duskpelt as he stepped into the sunlit meadow. A dozen other cats were also crowded around, adding in their greetings. He looked suprised, even stunned. Applestar smirked. Cats often are when they first see this place. It was a land with lush green grass, deep blue skies, and prey wherever you look. All this not to mention the loved ones and close friends you thought you had lost. It was truly an amazing place to be in.

"Wow, it's beautiful here." Duskpelt said, amazed. "Its hard to believe I'm really here."

"Everyone is stunned when they first arrive, honey." His mother, Daisyfur, said in a laughing voice. "Although I don't blame you. It can be a lot to take in."

Duskpelt glanced worriedly at Applestar, who seemed to be the leader of some kind. "Do I really get to stay here, forever?"

"Yes," He responded. "As long as you follow our rules like any other clan, you-" Applestar stopped suddenly. The gathered cats sensed his unease and stopped to look at him. Something was not right. The birds stopped chirping, pleasant breeze stopped blowing.

Seemingly out of nowhere stepped another cat. But this one was different. Instead of the beautiful, perfect coats of the Starclan cats, this one was dirty and ragged, scarred in many places and missing one eye, with an altogether almost shadow like appearance. "Darkmoon." Applestar muttered under his breath.

"What a nice greeting party you have for me here." Darkmoon said, in a dark, evil voice. "I'm touched, really, that you would go through all this just for little old Darkstar."

"Begone, fox-heart! There is nothing for you here, not your nine lives or anything else we could give you!" Applestar shouted at him,

anger clearly shown on his face. Darkmoon, however, still had a wicked smile on his. "Now, now, still resenting my name change, are we? But that is not why I'm here." His face grew darker and the smile turned into a scowl. "You have something, or should I say someone, that belongs with me."

"What are you talking about?" Applestar asked, confused.

"I mean Duskpelt. I'm taking him with me back to the dark forest. His crimes warrant much suffering there." Duskpelt's face was filled with fear and horror. He looked at the land around him then at Darkmoon before taking a step back.

"What crimes has he done against you?" Applestar said.

"Oh, a bit of murder, some betrayal. Nothing too bad, but bad enough." Darkmoon grinned. "He'll be in the dark forest for a long time."

"Nonsense! Leave, before I force you to, Darkmoon." Applstar shouted. "You know I have control here. Go back to the place from which you came!" Darkmoon's face turned from humor to hatred as he felt himself being pushed back into the dark forest.

"I will have my prize even though you can stop me today! You will grow weaker, then I will strike!" His body slowly turned to mist, until there was nothing left to show the dark blemish that was called Darkmoon, was ever there.

Allegiances

Appleclan:

Leader:
Bramblestar, a kind, calm cat with a brownish-orange coat. She is a forgiving leader yet very fierce in battle. Mated to Windwhisker.

Deputy:
Thornfur, a respectful and respected black colored cat, he obeys the warrior code to a word and expects others to do the same.

Medicine Cat:
Herbfeather, a gentle and considerate orange tabby cat. She is known to heal all creatures in need, clan or not.

Elders:
Sourfur, a cross and grumpy elder with a tendency to forget the way to the elder's den. Cinderfall, a overall nosy spotted cat who used to be a fearsome warrior.

Warriors:
Morningfire, a springy and strong cat with a yellow and black mixed coat. Mated to Honeydrop.
Wildnose, a loving and kind cat with a greyish coat.
Silentleaf, a foreboding cat who keeps to themselves easily with a night black coat.
Windwhisker, a nimble and quick cat, you never know when he will appear behind you. Mated to Bramblestar.
Skysong, a clever and friendly white feline, seemingly always ready for anything.

Branchwing, an optimistic and outgoing reddish-brown cat whom will brighten your day if you let her.

Queens:
Springleaf, a motherly and loyal cat who will protect her kits with

her life. Mated to a deceased cat.
Honeydrop, a sweet but fierce cat whom is expecting a litter of kits. Mated to Morningfire.

Apprentices:
Singepaw, a proud and tough apprentice whom seemingly feels superior to the others.
Shinepaw, quiet and kind, she loves to look up at the stars at night.

Kits:
Silverkit, a smart and friendly cat who shows promise to be a strong warrior at a young age.
Berrykit, a outgoing and energetic cat, always ready to play with her littermates.
Pebblekit, a shy cat who is eager to become a warrior and serve his clan.

Author's Note: this is my very first attempt at making a warriors fanfic! I hope you like it, even if it isn't fully fleshed out or engaging. I've only recently discovered the warriors books and haven't even read them yet, just a lot of fanfics and fan comics and instantly fell in love so I had to try it for myself. Hope you enjoy!

Edit: if there are any inconsistencies between allegiances and the story I apologize, if I find them I will fix it but if they contradict each other believe the book :D

Part One Cover Art

Chapter One: Awakening

Silverkit blinked open her eyes from a refreshing nap and a pleasant dream, finding herself staring into shockingly bright amber pupils. She screeched, jumping backwards away from the potential danger. Was another clan attacking? Did a fox get into camp? Giggling brought her back to her senses, and she relaxed after realizing it was just her sister, Berrykit.

"Berrykit!" Silverkit exclaimed indignantly. "Don't do that! You scared me!"

"I thought you couldn't be scared." Berrykit replied with a smile. "You said so."

"I was frightened, thats all." Sliverkit bit back, cleaning her now ruffled coat. "Why did you wake me up, anyways?"

"Do you want to go see Pebblekit with me? Springleaf says hes getting better and we can go visit if we behave." Silverkit perked her head back up. "Of course I do! He's been in the medicine den for forever, we haven't played with him in moons."

"Come on then, sleepy head!" Berrykit responded, leaping out of the nursery.

Both kits raced outside, across the clearing, and into the medicine cat den. Inside, they found Pebblekit, a little grey tabby cat, laying in a small nest in the corner of the room. As they crept inside, Pebblekit glanced towards them, his face lighting up as the pair entered the den.

"I thought you two would never come to see me!" He exclaimed. "It seemed I would be a warrior by the time you guys showed up."

"Sorry, Pebblekit." Silverkit explained. "Springleaf wouldn't let us

out of the den until today. How are you feeling?"

Pebblekit made a funny face. "My headache is completely gone, but I had to eat some nasty-tasting herbs."

"Can you come out and play then?" Berrykit asked eagerly. "Yes, I think he's ready to go outside again." Silverkit spun around. Entering the den was Herbfeather, carrying what looked like a bundle of herbs packed in leaves. She was the medicine cat of the clan, a dark orange tabby cat with a small scar on her leg where a fox clawed her.

Pebblekit looked suddenly energetic. "Really? Right now?" he asked anxiously.

"Sure," Herbfeather answered. "As long as you come straight back to me if your head starts hurting again, I don't see a reason why you can't go outside and play."

"Hooray!" Berrykit yelled. "Come on, lets play hide and seek, I want to seek!" She quickly dashed outside, Pebblekit eagerly following.

"Are you going to follow them?" Herbfeather asked Silverkit, who was standing there, seemingly indecisive.

"I wanted to talk to you, actually." She responded tentatively. "I had this weird dream last night - or this morning. At least, I think it was a dream." Herbfeather looked at her questioningly. "What do you mean?"

"It felt and looked like a dream, but my father was there." Silverkit answered.

"Oh, I see." Herbfeather said, as she tucked away the last of the herbs she had collected.

"Yeah." Said the silver-pelted kit. "Anyways, he said some funny sounding words and told me to remember them. It went like this:

'First the water of the clans
will have the disaster of four,

Then the life that can be seen
could be counted many, though poor.'"

Herbfeather stood motionless for a moment before turning around to look at the kit who suddenly seemed much more interesting. "And these words were from your dreams? Word for word?" she asked.

"Yes, if it was a dream." Silverkit sounded worried. "He made me memorize it perfectly. I was just wondering if that's normal. What if I'm sick like Pebblekit was?"

"Don't worry, you're certainly not sick. Now run along, I'm sure your siblings are waiting for you." Silverkit nodded happily and dashed outside to join the others, finding a good hiding spot behind the fresh kill pile.

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Meanwhile, in the leader's den, Bramblestar and Thornfur were discussing. "The apprentices are halfway done with their training, but I fear they won't be enough." Thornfur tells his leader as he paces across the floor of the den. "The other clans grow jealous of our bountiful forest and extra prey."

"I think I know how to solve this problem, but I'd rather avoid it." Bramblefur responded. "But if-" Just then, Herbfeather walked in. "Bramblestar, I need to talk to you immediately. " She glanced at Thornfur. "...in private."

Thornfur looked to Bramblestar for a moment before leaving with a nod, exiting the warm den and walking out into the cooling night air. Wondering what is more important than his conversation with Bramblestar, he grabbed a bite to eat from the fresh kill pile and scolded Silverkit for knocking into him while chasing a "mouse" before heading to bed.

Hope this first chapter is a good representation of what is to

come, enjoy the book!

Chapter Two: Apprentices

For context, there was a one moon time-skip, keep that in mind!

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The setting sun of the green-leaf day greeted a group of cats preparing to go on dusk patrol. Their heads turned to the High Tree, however, as Bramblestar alighted onto it. Those cats nearest to her had looks of confusion and discomfort on their faces. Bramblestar did not look happy. Her usual cheery demeanor was nowhere to be seen—replaced by a worried one.

"All cats old enough to catch their own prey, gather around the High Tree for a Clan meeting!" Bramblestar said, her voice loud enough to carry into all the dens. Cats emerged from every direction to gather below her.

Silverkit heard the call. She ignored it, however, as it did not concern her. Glancing at her littermates, she saw they were playing with a piece of string they had found stuck on the camp boundary. The three kits were alone in the nursery, as their mother, Springleaf, had just left to join the meeting.

"Oh, Thornfur! I didn't see you there," Silverkit heard her mother say. "Where are you headed during the meeting?"

"Nowhere," Thornfur responded. "I'll be there in a second, don't you worry."

Silverkit heard the sound of paws on grass fade away, until the entrance was darkened by a figure in the doorway.

"Come on, little kits. You are needed at this gathering."

"What for?" Berrykit asked. "We can't catch our own prey yet."

Thornfur glared at her disapprovingly. "Maybe you'd find out if you listened to your deputy," he commented. "Come on—we should not keep them waiting." With that, Thornfur turned around and headed back out the entrance.

Berrykit looked at Silverkit. "Keep them waiting?" she wondered aloud.

Silverkit shrugged and followed Thornfur outside, with the others close behind.

As they approached the High Tree, Silverkit realized just how strange it was for a kit to be at one of these meetings. They were usually for the Clan warriors to talk about important matters, or for a graduation ceremony when kits became apprentices. The only reason a kit would attend was if they were becoming an apprentice—but there were none old enough. It had been just her, Berrykit, and Pebblekit for as long as she could remember.

She didn't get much time to think about it, though, as Bramblestar began speaking once they sat down. All eyes turned to her.

"I'm sure you are all wondering why I've called you here," she began. "For a long time, the four Clans of the forest have lived in peace, each keeping to their own hunting grounds, each taking care of their own. This is how it should be." The concerned look on her face deepened. "However, the other Clans do not see it this way. In their eyes, the only way to survive is to thrive. They grow jealous of the extra prey we refuse to hunt for our own pleasure. They threaten our Clan by complaining that we only take what we need."

Bramblestar gazed around the clearing. She stopped when her eyes landed on the three kits sitting among the crowd.

"This is why, however unwilling I am to do so, it seems I'm forced to start the training of our three kits—Silverkit, Berrykit, and Pebblekit—earlier than is normal."

There was a small gasp among the gathered cats. There was a reason why kits were only made apprentices after six moons. Any younger, and they weren't quite strong enough to keep up during patrols or battles. Older, and it became harder to learn the many vital skills needed to survive in the forest. Silverkit knew these things. It must be *really* bad if Bramblestar had resorted to beginning their apprenticeships a moon early.

"I know it is unusual," Bramblestar continued. "But we cannot stand against all three other Clans, however strong our warriors may be now." She looked again at the trio. "Silverkit, Pebblekit, and Berrykit—step forward to receive your apprentice names."

Silverkit, still in a shocked state, stepped farther into the clearing. The cats in front of her moved aside so she could have a clear view of the High Tree.

"Until you are ready to receive your warrior names," Bramblestar said in a clear, resounding voice, "you three will be known as Silverpaw, Berrypaw, and Pebblepaw."

Wow! Chapter two and their already apprentices. They grow up so fast :,). Hope you guys enjoyed!

Next Chapter coming out Tomorrow, I'm already half done writing it so stay tuned! Additionally, I got some part one art that I'll publish and have link to in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Days to Come

"Silverpaw, Berrypaw, Pebblepaw! Silverpaw, Berrypaw, Pebblepaw!" This shout rang out across the clearing. As her eyes filled with tears, Silverkit looked at her siblings, now fellow apprentices. They looked as shocked as she felt. Actually, she didn't know what to feel. So many different emotions were spinning around in her head. Was she ready to become an apprentice? She wasn't even six moons old yet! But if Bramblestar believes in her, why shouldn't she be ready? It's an honor to be trusted to a mentor at such a young age.

That's when Silverpaw thought of something. A mentor! Who could it be? Maybe it's Wildnose, the cool and collected warrior who always keeps his head. Or perhaps her own mother, Springleaf. She could hardly wait as the chants of the cats surrounding her died down.

"New apprentices, of course, need mentors." Bramblestar declared as the last murmurs of the crowd faded. Silverpaw was so eagerly listening it was hard for her to stand still. "Berrypaw's mentor will be... Wildnose!" There were many cheers as the well-liked grey cat stepped up and touched noses with Berrypaw. Wildnose spoke softly in her ear, saying something neither Silverpaw nor anyone else could hear. "Such an energetic apprentice will need a patient mentor." Berrypaw blushed to the laughter as they stepped to the side.

Silverpaw anxiously awaited her name to be called. She was dying to know who her mentor would be. "Next up, we have Pebblepaw!" Silverpaw lightly growled to herself. She couldn't keep her tail from flicking with annoyance. "His mentor is... Silentleaf! One cannot deny their similar personalities will make them a hopefully successful pair." Silentleaf crept up to touch noses with his new apprentice before returning to his spot amidst polite cheers.

Finally, the moment Silverpaw had been waiting for! She was

happy for her siblings, but there was only so much she could take. Bramblestar seemed to pause dramatically for what felt like forever until she finally started. "And lastly, but not least, we have Silverpaw. Her new mentor will be..." The world seemed to freeze, time seeming to slow down infinitely at this crucial moment. "...Skysong!"

Silverpaw finally let out the breath she had been holding in. Skysong? Everyone liked Skysong! She was a clever, outgoing white cat who could brighten anyone's day, not to mention her tactical fighting abilities.

She finally snapped back to the present as Skysong walked up with a smile on her face and, during the cheers from the rest of the clan, touched noses with Silverpaw.

"I'm glad I was assigned to you." Skysong said to her.

"I'm glad too." Silverpaw responded before once again looking towards Bramblestar.

"Now that we have our apprentices assigned, I have one final thing to say to you all." Bramblestar stated, closing out the meeting. "We must be prepared for anything, whether we want to be or not. Now go, let us spend time relaxing while we can. Meeting dismissed."

With that final, mysterious message complete, Bramblestar leapt off High Tree. Silverpaw turned to her new mentor. "When do we start training? I want to begin immediately!"

"Woah there, Silverpaw." Skysong replied. "You should get a good night's sleep before we do anything. I'll see you tomorrow morning, at dawn sharp!"

Silverpaw smiled. Skysong walked away among the scattering crowd of cats. Some walked up to congratulate the three new apprentices before carrying on with whatever they were doing before the meeting.

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That night, Silverpaw looked up at the stars before heading to bed. It seemed like they were twice as bright tonight than usual. They seemed to Silverpaw to be a sign of good things to come.

However, as she lay falling asleep in her nest that night, there was only one thing she could think of. Her father.

Hope you enjoyed the the new chapter! I had a lot of fun picking the mentors, but I figured it out eventually. We'll see if I picked correctly soon! Also, here is the part one art I promised you guys: https://www.wattpad.com/1552144185-thunderfalls-warrior-cats-part-one-cover-art

P.S. Sorry for the bigger paragraphs, I was typing on my kindle and so couldn't tell how big they are XD!

Next chapter will be either tomorrow (June 22nd) or Monday, depending on how busy I'll be!

Chapter Four: The Borders

Dawn light poured through the thick forest, golden beams of light shining onto the soft moss of the apprentices' den. Silverpaw stirred. Today was her first day as an apprentice. She was finally going to leave the camp.

For a moment, she wanted to stay curled in her nest. She'd never been past the thorn barrier before. What if there were foxes out there? What if she got lost? What if she couldn't keep up?

But Skysong's words from last night echoed in her head: "Dawn *sharp*!"

With a big stretch to shake the sleep from her, Silverpaw ventured outside. The clearing shimmered with morning dew. Berrypaw was already awake, talking excitedly with Wildnose.

"Ready?" Skysong meowed behind her.

Silverpaw jumped. "Skysong, you surprised me! Yes, I'm ready for my first day."

Skysong chuckled. "You don't have to pretend you're not nervous. Every apprentice is. Come on. We'll tour the territory today, and I'll show you our borders."

They slipped through the entrance tunnel, the scent of the forest filling Silverpaw with an pleasant feeling of warmth. It was darker than the well lit clearing she was used to. There were towering trees, moss-covered logs, the songs of the birds. Her ears flicked at the snap of a twig.

"We're in AppleClan's heart," Skysong explained. "Thick forest, lots of prey, and peaceful trails. Our Clan is known for being generous and wise — especially our medicine cats. That's why others envy us."

"Envy us?" Silverpaw asked, stepping carefully over a root.

"MistClan, EmberClan, HollowClan—they all watch us. Some think our kindness makes us weak."

"But... that doesn't make any sense," Silverpaw answered, confused. "Why would they envy us for our kindness?"

"I don't know," Skysong responded. "But they hate us for it."

They followed a narrow path until the trees gave way to open space. Wind blew Silverpaw's fur as the land cut sharply downward—and she gasped.

Before them yawned a deep, misty gorge. It seemed to whisper secrets to Silverpaw as she watched its current. The southern border. Far across, reeds and winding waters marked MistClan's territory.

"The gorge separates us from MistClan. They're practical and quiet. They won't fight unless they have a reason to." Skysong's voice lowered. "And right now, as the season turns to leaf-fall, prey will get tighter. That gorge might not keep them away forever."

A sudden rustle from the undergrowth made Silverpaw jump. Skysong bristled—until Thornfur stepped out.

"You're up early," he meowed. His eyes flicked to Silverpaw. "Best stay alert near the gorge. Times are changing."

"Understood," Skysong replied quickly. He vanished back into the bushes without another word.

Silverpaw looked up at her mentor. "What was that about?"

"Deputies always have something on their mind." Skysong turned back to the task at hand. "Come on."

They looped northeast. The air thickened as the trees darkened. A rank stench filled the air—Thunderpath.

"This is the border with HollowClan," Skysong said. "They're not

StarClan-believers like us. Cold, observant, and quiet. Their pine forest is rocky. You won't hear them coming unless they want you to."

Silverpaw stepped back from the edge of the path as a monster roared past. She looked at Skysong with wide eyes.

"We won't linger here."

As they traveled south once more, a scent of long burnt trees filled the air. The brush thinned slightly, replaced by bramble and dusty undergrowth.

"EmberClan's border," Skysong said. "They're proud and fierce. That dry brush territory suits them."

"Would they attack us?" Silverpaw asked.

"They might, if they think we're weak. They believe in justice, but also strength." Skysong's eyes darkened. "Tensions are rising. We've been spared battles for moons, but I'm not sure how long that will last."

Finally, they arrived at a rise overlooking a grassy clearing encircled by four massive oaks. "This is Four Trees," Skysong said. "Where the Clans meet under truce for Gatherings. Next one, you'll come."

Silverpaw sat beside her, tail curled around her paws. The clearing was silent. Peaceful. It was hard to imagine battles or betrayal here.

Skysong gazed upward. "Our world is beautiful. But it's changing. You'll see."

Silverpaw felt a chill, despite the sunlight.

On her way back to camp, Silverpaw lay in her nest, paws sore and eyes heavy. But her mind was alive. The forest was bigger, stranger, and more dangerous than she had imagined. The other Clans weren't just names anymore—they were threats. Each border came with its own tension.

She wanted to protect AppleClan. She just wasn't sure how. As sleep pulled her under, a whisper stirred in the silence.

A whisper like rushing water.

Hey! I hope you've enjoyed so far. I know this chapter is a bit longer than usual, but I really wanted to pack in the entire territory tour.

Next Chapter coming out tomorrow!

Part Two Cover Art

[image]

Dramatic art that tells of things to come?

Edit: my apologies if it's too dark to see 🧐

Chapter Five: It Begins

Silverpaw braced for impact. The force of the blow struck hard and knocked her off her feet. However, she fell with her paws under her just like Skysong taught her, landing gracefully with only a slight shock in her legs.

"Good! Stay light on your paws, it will help you avoid and take blows much easier!" Silverpaw heard her mentor comment.

Her opponent was dangerous. A predator of apprentices. A beast to be conquered. A force to be reckoned with. And it's name was Berrypaw.

"How did you like that!" Berrypaw shouted. Silverpaw said nothing, instead appearing to be weakened, the wind knocked out of her. Berrypaw took this opportunity to lunge once more at her vulnerable opponent.

It was a mistake.

Silverpaw immediately dashed to the side, giving Berrypaw a nasty surprise as she crashed into the hard sand of the training ground. Before giving her time for any sort of respite, Silverpaw leapt on top of her sister, pinning her down.

Berrypaw's efforts to escape were in vain. She was well and truly defeated.

"Amazing work, Silverpaw!" Skysong said, approaching the duo. "You used your enemy's weakness against them."

Wildnose was right behind her. "How many times must I tell you, Berrypaw, do not rush into your attacks!" He sounded exasperated. "You need to think it through *before* you go on the offensive." Berrypaw looked ashamed.

The four of them were at the training hollow, a small nook near

the thickest part of AppleClan's forest. All around them, they were surrounded by trees, except for the frequently used path that led out and a small clearing for spectators.

Silverpaw let go of her sister, allowing Berrypaw to get up.

"How did you do that? It's like you knew what I was going to do before I did it." She commented. "You seemed so weak and vulnerable... until I attacked, that is." She added with a smile.

"Oh, I know how eager you can be when you're excited." Silverpaw shrugged. "It was just good timing."

Berrypaw let out a mock-growl. "Next time I'll get you for sure." But her eyes were shining with pride for her sister.

Skysong gave her apprentice an approving glance. Wildnose, however, sighed.

"I guess we will have to go back to the basics." He said with a painful grimace.

"Come on, let's leave them to it." Skysong nodded to her apprentice, turning towards the path leading out of the clearing. Silverpaw quickly followed, and, catching up with her mentor, asked a question that had been on her mind for a while.

"Why do we have to train to fight so much? I get we are under threat from the other clans, but no fighting has occurred in moons. Why should it now?"

Skysong turned her head to be able to see her young apprentice. "Because, leaf-bare is coming. Leaf-fall will be over before you know it, and the clans will be hungry again. They will see our bountiful forest and want it for themselves. We may be able to hope things turn out differently, but as StarClan knows, only fools rely on hope alone." Skysong looked at her for a moment before turning her eyes back on the path ahead.

Silverpaw grew silent at these words, deep in thought. Everyone made it sound so grave, even Branchwing, AppleClan's optimistic she-cat. Almost like there was something dark looming on the

horizon.

Silverpaw shook the feeling off. There was no benefit in believing rumors.

Then a thought struck her. What about that dream she had? The one that had her father in it? Silverpaw didn't know much about her father. Springleaf refused to talk about him. But that wasn't important right now. Her father had given her a message.

"'First the waters of the clans'- What does that mean?" She wondered to herself quietly. "Maybe it has something to do with the river? But what about the next part. 'Will have a disaster of five', er, no, four. 'Will have disaster of four'".

Silverpaw contemplated this for a while. She decided the meaning must be in the next line. "'Then the life that can be-!'" Thunk. She let out only a small, sharp cry before her head hit a fallen log on the side of the trail as she stumbled across a root. Stars burst in her eyes. The forest spun. The sounds of the training hollow began echoing as if through a cave. Darkness soon swallowed her in its cold embrace as she heard Skysong's surprised exclamation.

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When she came to, Silverpaw was no longer lying by the forest path. Instead, she was in a clear, grassy meadow. Above was a deep, blue sky, partly blotted out by the beech tree she was laying under. Surprisingly, Silverpaw found she could stare straight into the bright, vibrant sun.

In the distance, she could see a group of about a dozen cats, all crowding around one. They had a somewhat ghostly appearance, but in a clean, white way instead of a dark, creepy way.

Silverpaw watched them with mounting curiosity and confusion as each one talked to who appeared to be a newcomer. They were too far away to hear, but it seemed they had a friendly word or two

to tell them.

"Well, look who's finally here." A deep, mysterious voice rumbled from behind her.

Dun, dun, duuuuuhhh! Sorry to leave it on a cliff hanger, but this chapter is getting much too long and I need my beauty sleep. Hope y'all enjoyed!

As always, chapter six coming out tomorrow!

Chapter Six: Thunder

Silverpaw spun around. A tall, dark-furred tom stood beneath the shade of the beech tree. His fur shimmered faintly in the sunlight, as though woven with mist, and his amber eyes glowed like twin moons. He looked familiar—and yet not.

"Do I know you?" Silverpaw asked, her voice sounding small in the wide meadow.

The tom smiled. It did not seem cruel, but something about it made her fur prickle. "Not yet. But I've been watching you, Silverpaw. You are a curious little cat."

Silverpaw took a step back. "Is this StarClan?"

The tom turned his gaze toward the gathering of cats in the distance. "StarClan welcomes those who have died. But I'm not part of that crowd."

Silverpaw followed his gaze. He was looking at the cat they were crowded around. Something seemed familiar about him. Did she know him? He was someone she could trust, no matter how dire the situation may be. Silverpaw snapped out of it. Of course she did not know him. Or the cat who stood next to her, for that matter.

"Then where am I? Who are *you*?" she demanded, tail flicking in alarm.

"That depends who you ask. He answered smoothly. "Some call me Darkmoon, but my true name is Darkstar."

The name hit her like a stone. She didn't know where she'd heard it before—only that it left a sour taste in her mouth.

"You're not supposed to be here, are you?" Silverpaw whispered.

"And yet, here I am." He said in a calm, knowing voice. "You've

seen something, haven't you? A warning, perhaps? A prophecy."

Silverpaw recoiled. "How do you know that?"

"Because I know what is coming." He took a step forward, the sun above seeming to dim. "You think the danger is in the forest. That the other Clans are the threat. But the real danger is worse than that. Far more dangerous. We'll meet again, Silverpaw, but remember. The water is just the beginning."

With that, Darkmoon disappeared. Looking back to the gathering of cats, Silverpaw could see him appear near them.

Before she could react, the world began to blur—the beech tree, the meadow, the ghostly cats—everything faded like mist under morning sun.

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"Silverpaw!" Skysong's voice cut through the darkness. "Come on —wake up! Please!"

Silverpaw gasped and sat up, paws skidding. She was back on the path, the scent of damp leaves in her nose. Her head throbbed, and her vision swam—but the forest was real again.

"You hit your head pretty hard," Skysong said, crouching beside her. "Are you alright?"

"I think so..." Silverpaw muttered. She looked around, disoriented. The sun blinded her as if she had not seen light in days.

Skysong's voice softened. "You said something while you were out. About... the waters of the Clans?"

Silverpaw's breath caught. "You heard that?"

"Only a few words. Is there something you're not telling me?"

Silverpaw hesitated. She hadn't told anyone but Herbfeather about her first dream—or the voice of her father. "I think I'm having... visions," she admitted slowly. "Prophecies. The kind medicine cats get, I think."

Skysong's expression flickered with doubt. "You're not a medicine cat, Silverpaw."

"I know." Her voice shook. "But I'm sure there is something StarClan is trying to tell me."

"Then we'll tell Bramblestar. And Herbfeather too," Skysong said gently, a thoughtful look on her face. "They will certainly know if it is StarClan or not. And, if you are ever uncertain, remember, I'm always here for you."

Silverpaw nodded, though fear still gnawed at her belly. Something told her that the danger ahead was bigger than anyone knew.

The water was just the beginning.

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As they made their way back to camp, there was an awkward silence between mentor and apprentice. Silverpaw felt different after her recent encounter. She was surprised and confused, yet felt stronger, braver somehow. As she looked at her mentor, Silverpaw felt that whatever was coming, whatever she might face, she could handle.

Thunder cracked in the distance, jolting her out of her deep thoughts. Skysong looked to the sky, frowning. "There is a storm coming. We need to get back to camp, now."

"What about Berrypaw and Wildnose?" Silverpaw answered worriedly.

"They can find their way back." Skysong responded. "Come on, let's get back before the rain starts."

Despite their increased pace, a downpour came down upon them. They continued on through the rain, occasionally slipping in the mud, but they were nimble on their feet and managed to avoid falling. Soon enough, they came into sight of camp. Crawling through the entrance, they emerged from the tunnel to see the sight of a busy clearing.

"Skysong, Silverpaw." Thornfur called to them. "Good to see you here. This is a mess."

"What's happening?" Skysong asked for the both of them.

"You don't know?" The deputy responded with surprise. "The river. It's overflowing."

Gasp! Not the river! Hope you guys are enjoying the story so far, I aim to have these chapters a bit longer, about 800-900 words as opposed to the 600-700 I was doing before!

Next Chapter out tomorrow!

Chapter Seven: Stormsurge

The rain had not stopped.

It poured into the forest in sheets, drenching ground and trees alike. AppleClan's camp was in chaos. Cats rushed back and forth through the clearing, pelts slick with rain, voices raised over the roar of wind and thunder. Silverpaw stood at the edge of the apprentice's den, fur plastered to her sides, heart thudding in her chest. The river was rising. If they didn't do something soon, the flooding would get them.

"Skysong!" Thornfur's voice rang across the clearing. "We need more paws at the gorge! The river is overflowing, the southern trails are washing out."

Skysong turned sharply, already soaked through. "Silverpaw, with me. Bring bramble twine and moss bundles—anything to help patch the slope."

Silverpaw nodded and scrambled into the medicine den. "Herbfeather, do you have any dry moss left?"

"Only a bit," the orange tabby said, nodding toward a small bundle. "And be careful out there. The ground's slick."

Silverpaw grabbed it and darted back out, following Skysong and Thornfur toward the south side of the territory. Rain hammered the forest, dripping from branches in heavy drops. The usually cheerful paths were now streams, the forest floor slippery and unstable. Silverpaw skidded once on a patch of muddy root, but she caught herself, breath ragged.

When they reached the gorge, her heart clenched. The river was no longer a tranquil stream between MistClan and AppleClan. It was a beast—roaring, wild, swollen with rain. Trees along the edge had already fallen, their roots clawing uselessly at the air. Mud was sliding down in chunks toward the river below. Cats were clustered

near the edge, laying brambles and pushing stones to reinforce the slope.

"AppleClan's side is holding for now," Skysong muttered. "But MistClan..."

Across the gorge, the river had surged into MistClan's territory. Even from a distance, Silverpaw could see the water creeping past the reeds. Several MistClan cats stood on their bank, staring across the river, eyes wide with worry and panic.

"They're going to flood unless we do something." Skysong said worriedly.

Thornfur joined them. "There's talk of sending a patrol across the gorge. To help them evacuate their camp. I hear it's already flooding."

Silverpaw blinked. "But... how? The river's too dangerous to cross."

"There's an old log bridge upstream," Thornfur said grimly. "If it's still there."

"We'll go," Skysong said. "Me, Silverpaw, and—"

"I will," said Windwhisker, stepping up beside them. Rain trickled down his narrow face. "I'm fast, and I know the riverbank."

Thornfur hesitated, then nodded. "Be swift. And careful. If the log is gone, turn back. Don't try to swim or you'll drown yourselves."

The three cats raced along the gorge's edge. The river growled beside them, monstrous and loud. Lightning cracked above the trees, one nearby lighting on fire before it was quickly put out by rain. Silverpaw felt like the sky itself was falling. The rain was so thick it was hard to see two fox-lengths in front of her.

Then she saw it; a huge, moss-covered log stretched across a narrow part of the gorge. It look rickety at best, slippery and unsafe at worst. Water churned far below, smashing into rocks and debris.

"Stay low," Windwhisker instructed. "One at a time. I'll go first." He stepped onto the log and padded quickly but carefully across, balancing perfectly. He made it.

Skysong quickly followed, a little less graceful, then gestured to Silverpaw."You've got this," she called. "Just like the balance drills."

Silverpaw stepped onto the log. The bark was slick, rain pounding her face. The stormy wind screamed in her ears. She focused only on her paws—one step, then another. The gorge howled beneath her. *Don't look down, don't look down!* She thought to herself. Focusing on the other side, she finished with a leap, landing safely on the opposite bank.

MistClan warriors were waiting—eyes wary, but grateful. "We'll help move the elders," Skysong said. "Lead the way."

Silverpaw followed the drenched felines through water-logged grass and sodden reeds. The camp was nearly underwater. Cats were hobbling towards the shoreline, kits clinging to their mothers' backs. Silverpaw joined the effort without hesitation. She and Skysong helped support an older she-cat with a limp, while Windwhisker guided two drenched apprentices through the reeds.

Catching a glimpse of the water, she realized it was rising fast. Too fast. "We have to go, now!" a MistClan tom yowled.

They rushed back to the log crossing, but when they arrived, a terrifying sight met their eyes. The rotted trunk had fallen. Silverpaw could see it floating away below her. They were stuck on the wrong side of the river, with no way across. The younger cats began to wail with despair. They were going to die here, stranded on the island MistClan called home for so many moons.

"StarClan save us." Skysong mumbled.

Silverpaw looked up into the sky. There were so many clouds, and yet she could see a single, bright star, the color of early dusk.

"Please, help us." She whispered quietly, drenched in the sopping rain of the thunderstorm.

This seems like quite the predicament. I wonder how they will survive... If they do .

I'm a bit busy today but since I write these chapters a day in advance next chapter still tmr!

Chapter Eight: Washed Out

Silverpaw looked into the sky, eyes filled with tears, until she realized just that; tears. No rain.

One moment, the sky was screaming with wind and water—then, suddenly, everything stilled. The clouds parted. The rain disappeared. A hush fell over the drenched clearing as cats looked skyward, stunned.

Silverpaw lifted her head. The star she'd seen was gone, but the pale color of dawn was already bleeding through the scattering clouds. The river's roar faded to a tired groan as its swollen current slowed to its usual speed.

Next to her, Skysong stared at the sky with wide eyes, ears tilted back.

"Did you see that?" Silverpaw whispered.

Skysong didn't answer right away. Her gaze lingered on the thinning clouds. Then she slowly turned to her apprentice, eyes narrowed—not disbelief, but thought.

"See what?" she said at last. "The clouds parting, saving us from almost certain death? Yeah, it was kind of obvious."

Before Silverpaw could answer, Windwhisker splashed through the shallows toward them. "The current's easing up," he said. "We might be able to swim it if we're careful."

Silverpaw looked to the others. MistClan cats were blinking in shock, still catching their breath after the terrifying night. Kits meowed softly, nestled against their mothers. Elders trembled beside their younger Clanmates, too tired to speak.

"Let's get everyone across while we can," Skysong said, regaining her voice. "Silverpaw, Windwhisker— help the weakest first. The

rest can swim it themselves."

They worked in silence, carefully guiding the MistClan cats into the water one by one. AppleClan cats helped those who made it across, giving out scraps of food. Silverpaw could see Herbfeather move about the injured cats as she supported the limp elder she had helped earlier. Her legs ached, yet she trudging on. She didn't know if it was the prophecy or the star, but something had changed. The storm hadn't just broken—it had revealed something. Something dark. Something foreboding.

The remaining cats finished swimming across to the AppleClan side, until the far bank was empty and the battered and swamped MistClan camp left behind. Some MistClan cats wept quietly once they reached dry land; others simply collapsed.

"Thank you," rasped a MistClan she-cat, soaked to the bone. "You didn't have to help us. But you did."

"We couldn't leave you," Skysong said gently. "Not when we could help."

By the time they returned to AppleClan camp, the sun had risen to its peak. Its light was pale and watery through the thinning clouds, but it was warm on Silverpaw's soaked pelt.

Everything was quieter now. The river had calmed. The camp was no longer panicked, only exhausted. Most cats were resting or checking for damage.

Silverpaw could see the MistClan leader, Brookstar, talking to Bramblestar. As she passed by, Silverpaw heard some of the conversation.

"Thank you, Bramblestar," Brookstar said. "I fear the cats we could have lost without your help. We cannot express our gratitude for the hospitality you are showing us."

Silverpaw did not hear Bramblestar's response and instead sat beside Skysong outside the apprentice's den. Her legs ached. Her eyes burned. But her mind wouldn't rest.

"Seems like MistClan will be staying with us for a while." Skysong noted as she sat down.

Silverpaw nodded in agreement. "I hope there will be enough fresh kill and bedding."

They both looked at the number of cats now in the clearing. AppleClan was already made up of almost twenty cats. With the addition of MistClan, there were maybe thirty-five or forty. She sighed. Tough times lay ahead.

"I heard you, by the way." Skysong said quietly.

Silverpaw turned. "You did?"

She nodded. Silverpaw hesitated, saying, "I think I'm seeing things. Important things. Warnings. The first one came in a dream... with a voice. It was about water. I should have recognized it. It's my fault this happened. I could have warned them."

"It's not your fault. You've always had something in you," she said softly. "Something that sets you apart. Maybe StarClan is beginning to notice, too."

"I saw a star," Silverpaw added. "Right before the storm ended. It was strange—pale and orange, like dusk. Even with all those clouds, it was the only one I could see."

Skysong looked at her carefully. "That sounds like... someone watching you."

Silverpaw flicked her ear. "That voice in the dream... he felt close. Like family." The silence stretched between them.

"Was it my father?" she asked.

Skysong's eyes softened. "I'm not the best one to tell you about him."

"Then who is?"

Skysong sighed and looked toward the medicine den.

"Herbfeather might know more than you think. And Springleaf..." Her voice faltered. "Well. Maybe it's time you asked her."

Silverpaw said nothing. She knew her mom was not keen on the subject.

She felt different. Like she had changed. Whatever was happening, she wasn't imagining it.

And she wasn't alone.

Happy ending! A long chapter over all, but this was an important one. I feel like things are all going a bit too fast, so we'll be slowing down and going through a lot more of c lan life (and the consequences of this disaster!) Get comfy, this story is just beginning!

Next chapter tomorrow!

Chapter Nine: Aftermath

Though the sun was at its peak in the sky, the warmth it offered felt weak, giving Silverpaw little comfort. AppleClan's camp was crowded. MistClan cats filled the clearing, their pelts damp and their eyes weary. Silverpaw had never seen so many cats in one place. It was so crowded, it was nearly impossible not to bump into someone.

She padded through the camp with moss in her jaws, delivering fresh bedding to the elders' den—now hosting an additional three from MistClan as well as AppleClan's Sourfur and Cinderfall. The space was tight, and tempers were shorter than usual.

"Watch my tail, would you?" snapped one of the elders Silverpaw didn't recognize.

"Sorry," she muttered, laying the moss down. She backed out quickly and nearly collided with Morningfire, a cat with a yellow and black coat and one of the more senior AppleClan warriors.

"Careful," he said with a tired flick of his ears. "The camp's bursting at the seams."

"I know," Silverpaw muttered. "I don't think anyone's slept."

Morningfire gave a small grunt of agreement before heading inside the Elder's den.

Silverpaw glanced across the clearing. The leaders of the two clans stood beneath the Hightree, talking in hushed tones. Brookstar looked worn and stiff, but Bramblestar's tail swayed behind her.

"...We can't feed two Clans," Bramblestar was saying. Silverpaw strained to hear. "Our stores were low before the storm. If this keeps up—"

Brookstar's voice was calm but firm. "We have nowhere else to

go."

A movement at her side made Silverpaw jump. It was her mother, Springleaf.

She gave Silverpaw a tight hug. "I was worried about you," her mother said gently. "When you we're on the other side of the gorge. Thank StarClan you made it back safely."

"Mom, I'm not a kit anymore. I can take care of myself."

She smiled. "I know, but you will always be my little Silverkit." They embraced again, before Springleaf returned to whatever task she was doing, leaving Silverpaw alone with her thoughts.

That afternoon, Bramblestar sent out a patrol to check the riverbank for damage. Skysong led it, taking Silverpaw with her, along with two other AppleClan cats, Branchwing and Shinepaw. The air was thick with humidity, and the ground squelched under their paws.

When they reached the river, it had returned to its usual size—but something was off. The water was cloudy, tinted brown with much debris and dirt floating throughout. It looked sickly, as if it had a disease. *But rivers can't have diseases, can they?* Silverpaw thought.

"Look!" Shinepaw pointed. A small silver scaled fish floated belly-up in the shallows. Then they saw another. And another. There were dozens of them among the debris.

"They're dead," Branchwing murmured. "What horrible thing could have killed this many fish?"

Skysong sniffed the air and recoiled. "It smells foul." The stench rolled off the water in waves—sour, bitter, wrong.

Silverpaw felt her stomach twist. "This isn't just floodwater. Something's wrong."

They gathered a few of the fish and returned to camp. Herbfeather examined them with a deepening frown.

"They didn't drown. These fish... they rotted. I suddenly have the feeling the flooding is just the start of this danger."

Skysong and Silverpaw exchanged worried looks. Not only MistClan, but all the clans would be affected by this.

Many days passed, the camp was beginning to become restless. No cat touched the fresh-kill that was caught near the river. MistClan cats whispered among themselves. A few kits were coughing. The medicine cats of both clans worked constantly.

Silverpaw sat near the edge of camp, looking up at the stars. They were faint, just now beginning to appear.

She heard footsteps behind her. Skysong.

"Our food stores are quickly running out." her mentor said. "With so many cats to feed, we can hardly collect enough food."

"It would help if MistClan did their own hunting." Silverpaw replied aggressively.

They sat in silence for a moment.

"The gathering is occurring in five days." Skysong broke the silence. "I've talked to Bramblestar. She said you can come."

Silverpaw's heart leapt, but a thread of worry snuck its way in behind it. It was finally time for her first gathering. "What is the gathering like?" She asked.

"It's mostly just a way for cats from other clans to get together and converse, but it will be interesting this time." She responded. They gazed up at the moon. It was glowing bright, as if comforting Silverpaw with its company. "Did you talk to your mother yet?" Skysong asked.

Silverpaw hesitated. "She won't tell me anything. She says it doesn't matter."

"It does. More than you know."

She glanced at her. "I think the cat in my dream... the one with the warm voice. I think he was my father."

Skysong didn't look surprised. She just nodded slowly.

"You should try again. Or talk to Herbfeather. One of them has to know."

Silverpaw looked back at the dark night sky. "Maybe they do. But what if they don't want me to?"

The wind rustled the trees. The river, once a beast, now whispered softly in the distance. But Silverpaw knew it wasn't over.

Not yet.

Glad I finally let myself write something other than constant action! Though it's time Silverpaw's first gathering. This oughta be good *grabs popcorn*.

Chapter Ten out tomorrow!

Chapter Ten: Still Waters

The sun rose slowly over AppleClan's camp, casting long golden beams through the trees and painting the clearing in pale warmth. For the first time since the storm, the sky was calm.

Silverpaw padded out of the apprentice den, stretching each leg with a long yawn. Her muscles ached from days of helping MistClan. For once, though, no one was calling her name or sending her running off to haul wet moss or help carry elders.

Across the clearing, cats milled quietly. Silentleaf and Pebblepaw were talking together near the nursery. Thornfur spoke with Bramblestar at the High Tree, looking grim and aggravated. Everything looked... normal. But Silverpaw knew better than to believe that feeling would last.

"Hey, slowpoke," Berrypaw called. She bounded over, ears perked. "Haven't seen you in forever. Want to help me clean out the bedding? Cinderfall says it smells like drowned vole."

Silverpaw gave a tired snort. "You clean it, then. I just stopped smelling like a drowned vole."

"Ugh, fine," Berrypaw groaned, but she nudged her with a friendly shoulder bump before trotting off toward the elder's den.

Silverpaw watched her go, heart lightening a bit. She had missed the days where she could frolic around with her littermates, with not a care in the world. Silverpaw was about to follow her when a sharp voice interrupted her thoughts.

"Apprentices shouldn't be loafing around." It was Singepaw, who sat beneath the bramble thicket, grooming one spotless paw. Singepaw was Thornfur's apprentice, and he made sure everyone knew it. "Some of us are actually keeping busy."

Silverpaw rolled her eyes. "What, brushing your fur like a

kittypet?"

Singepaw narrowed his eyes. "Careful who you call kittypet, mouse brain."

Before Silverpaw could snap back, Shinepaw padded up between them, her voice light and merry despite the clan's current situation. "Come on, you two. Bramblestar said we should be on our best behavior while MistClan is here. Don't ruin it by getting in trouble."

Singepaw gave Silverpaw one last angry glare and padded off, tail high.

Silverpaw sighed. "Thanks," she muttered.

"He's not as clever as he thinks he is." Shinepaw smiled. "Trust me, he's my brother."

Later, Silverpaw joined Skysong and a hunting patrol. The forest had begun to dry out, though mud still clung in the hollows and underbrush. They moved slowly, careful not to slip. Skysong moved like a shadow, her white pelt blending with the morning mist.

"Stay low," she whispered. "There's a squirrel near that fallen log."

Silverpaw crouched and crept forward, keeping her belly close to the damp earth. The squirrel was twitching nervously but hadn't seen her yet. With a burst of speed, she pounced—landing just short. The squirrel shrieked and fled up the nearest tree.

Silverpaw groaned. "Fox dung." She was still learning how to hunt, as her early training had mostly been fighting.

"You're improving," Skysong said kindly. "Next time, try placing your back paws more carefully."

They managed to catch two mice before heading back. As they returned to camp, Silverpaw caught the faint scent of rot again—just barely, drifting from the direction of the river atop the wind. Her fur prickled in discomfort.

No one else seemed to notice.

That evening, the Clan gathered to share tongues. Tension between AppleClan and MistClan had only increased, and it was still easy to feel the invisible divide. The two leaders were discussing something quietly at the edge of camp. Silverpaw turned as her mother approached her.

Springleaf looked excited. "Honeydrop is going to have kits!" She said. "The clan hasn't had any since, well, you three."

"That's so exciting!" Silverpaw replied happily. "I wonder how many there will be, and what they'll look like."

Berrypaw sprang up out of seemingly nowhere. "What's going on?" She immediately asked.

"Honeydrop is having kits." Springleaf answered. "I bet Morningfire is ecstatic. Anyways, I've got to go report this to Bramblestar, see you two later!" Silverpaw watched as she dashed across the clearing. She thought it was funny to see her mother so happy, like a kit.

Silverpaw settled beside Berrypaw that night. They asked Pebblepaw to join them, but he said he was too busy. *Too busy sleeping?* She wondered. They shared stories, swapped jokes, and whispered about the coming Gathering. For a moment, it felt like she was just another apprentice, waiting to grow into her future.

And yet, that feeling still lingered in the back of her mind. Was she the only one that felt it? The dead fish. The star she had seen. The prophecy. She didn't know what was coming next.

But she knew she wouldn't have to face it alone.

A nice little break between the drama and chaos! I feel like I haven't really added much day to day drama so I hope you enjoyed a bit of that here.

Next chapter tomorrow!

Chapter Eleven: The Gathering

Silverpaw awoke the day of the gathering. Weirdly enough, she did not feel very excited. In fact, a sense of dread for the coming day filled her with unease. *What will it be like?* she wondered, getting up and stretching in preparation of the long day ahead.

"When are we leaving for the gathering?" Silverpaw asked Berrypaw.

"Wildnose said early tonight." Berrypaw answered, also waking up. "We'll still have our normal training."

Silverpaw groaned. She had just remembered she had battle training with Singepaw that day. Mentally preparing herself, she walked into the clearing as the sun rose.

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The night was clear, the sky stretched wide with stars. A perfect moon hung overhead—full and bright, promising peace.

Despite her tiring training and Singepaw's endless taunts, Silverpaw could hardly stay still.

"Are you ready?" Skysong asked her apprentice as the assembling cats gathered near the entrance.

"Yes!" Silverpaw said quickly—then paused. "I think so."

Berrypaw snorted behind her. "She's been ready since sunhigh. She nearly knocked me over when Bramblestar announced we were going."

"I just want to see what it's like," Silverpaw muttered, embarrassed.

"You'll never forget your first," Skysong said, eyes warm.

They set off into the woods. Bramblestar led the patrol with Thornfur close behind. AppleClan warriors and apprentices trailed them, MistClan cats padding quietly within their ranks. No one mentioned the still-muddy ground or the faint, lingering smell of rot from the river. Silverpaw could feel it, though. The earth hadn't healed yet.

They reached Fourtrees just as other Clans began to arrive. Silverpaw gasped.

So many cats.

They poured into the clearing like a sea of fur and gleaming eyes —black, brown, gold, gray, what felt like all the colors. Silverpaw caught glimpses of EmberClan warriors with sturdy, muscular builds and stern expressions. HollowClan moved in shadows, quiet and sharp-eyed. MistClan stayed close to AppleClan, still dampened by their recent losses.

"There are so many cats here," she whispered. "More than us and MistClan."

"It always feels that way," Skysong replied softly. "It's good to see more every year."

As they padded down the slope, cats began to mingle. The moon cast silvery shadows between the four great oaks, and the leaders were climbing the Great Rock.

Berrypaw darted off immediately to chat and make friends with some EmberClan apprentices. Silverpaw hesitated, watching the shifting crowd. She spotted Singepaw speaking confidently to a group of HollowClan cats, puffed up like a proud squirrel.

She wandered toward the edge of the gathering, eyes wide, ears straining. Taking it all in.

"Hi!" said a voice beside her. Silverpaw turned, surprised, to see what seemed to be a black-and-white EmberClan apprentice standing next to her. "You seem new here. Is this your first Gathering?"

"Um, yea." She responded. The multi colored feline smiled.

"I can tell from your expression, I felt the same during my first time. My name is Petalpaw, what's yours?"

Silverpaw was surprised. EmberClan cats were supposed to be dangerous and generally untrustworthy, but this one seemed like the opposite. "It's Silverpaw." She responded.

"Nice to meet you! Seems like the leaders are starting, hope to see you after!" Petalpaw made an abrupt finish and bounded happily away.

Silverpaw sat next to her mentor just as the gathering started. A deep meow echoed across the clearing. Bramblestar had stepped forward.

"AppleClan opens tonight's Gathering with news," she said. Her voice was calm and steady, but Silverpaw could see the tension in her stance. "MistClan suffered devastating flooding. We are giving them our aid. They are staying in our camp until it is safe to return."

Murmurs spread. EmberClan cats whispered among themselves. The HollowClan leader—a pale, sharp-featured tom called Ravenstar—tilted his head with interest.

Brookstar spoke next. "AppleClan helped much. Without their help, we could have lost elders, kits... and more. We thank them for their support but we cannot wait to return home."

One EmberClan warrior spoke aloud, breaking the crowd's mumbling. "Maybe if MistClan watched the river better, they wouldn't need saving."

Gasps rippled across the gathering.

Brookstar bristled, but EmberClan's leader, Falconstar, raised his tail. "What Blackstone meant is that this disaster is troubling. But each Clan must protect its own. While our water is poisoned, we seek no help from AppleClan nor do we need it. If MistClan is too weak to help themselves, maybe they do not deserve saving."

Skysong growled softly beside Silverpaw. Silverpaw's fur prickled. *He's suggesting we leave them to die. I can't believe anyone could be so cold-hearted.*

Then Ravenstar spoke, voice even and quiet. "HollowClan has noticed things as well. Not flooding, but sickness. Birds falling from trees. Dead prey found untouched. Herbs withering too early." His eyes gleamed in the moonlight. "Something is wrong."

A hush fell.

Silverpaw felt it again—the faint scent of rot, drifting past like a whisper only she could smell. She turned her eyes skyward.

"This is ridiculous. I refuse to let cats die for no reason. Come on, AppleClan, we're leaving." Bramblestar jumped down from the Great Rock and began walking into the forest.

Tension sparked between the Clans as they turned to leave—EmberClan striding proudly, HollowClan vanishing like smoke, MistClan quiet and clinging together.

Silverpaw padded alongside Skysong, her head spinning.

"This is just the beginning, isn't it?" she said.

Skysong looked at her. "Yes. I think it is."

Wow the clans are not the biggest fans of each other. Especially that EmberClan...

Next Chapter out tomorrow!

Chapter Twelve: Signs

The sky had turned a soft gray by morning, and the forest breathed a heavy, damp stillness. The storm was gone, and MistClan had returned to their territory days ago, yet the air still carried the scent of unease, like a secret whispered just beyond hearing.

Silverpaw stretched her stiff limbs and padded out into the clearing. Life had settled down. The elders grumbled less, the nursery was quiet again, and Honeydrop's belly had begun to swell with new life. Apprentices were back to training, patrols moved with steady rhythm, and the fresh-kill pile brimmed once more. But beneath it all, Silverpaw felt the faintest tremor of unrest, as if the forest itself hesitated to breathe fully.

She walked toward the fresh-kill pile and picked a half-dried squirrel from the top. Shinepaw sat near the edge of camp, chewing on a grouse slowly while staring into the distance with distant eyes.

"You okay?" Silverpaw asked, settling beside her.

Shinepaw shrugged but did not meet her gaze. "I guess. I just... I keep thinking about the Gathering. What HollowClan said. About prey dying, their herbs failing. What if it's not just a bad season?"

Silverpaw said nothing. The memory of the dead fish floating in the river, the foul-smelling water, the rotting plants along the banks pressed in her mind like shadows refusing to fade. Something was still wrong, and the quiet that had returned felt fragile.

"Whatever comes, I'm sure we can handle it." She said comfortingly.

Shinepaw gave her a faint smile in response. *If only I could believe that myself.* Silverpaw thought in the pleasant silence that followed.

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Later that day, Silverpaw trained with Skysong in the forest. They moved slowly through thick undergrowth, practicing the silent art of stalking without snapping a twig or rustling a leaf. The mud clung stubbornly to Silverpaw's paws, and she struggled to keep her balance, but Skysong's patience never faltered.

As they rested beside a small, gurgling stream, Silverpaw gazed into the murky water, trying to shake the haunting image of bloated silver bellies floating beneath its surface.

Out of the corner of her eye, Silverpaw could see Skysong looking curiously at her. "What is it? Silverpaw asked.

"You look like you're thinking about something." She replied. "You always get that look in your eyes when your thinking- like your looking at something distant or unclear."

Silverpaw sniffed. "I was just thinking, StarClan warned me that the flood was coming. If I had just listened to what they were trying to tell me, We could have saved MistClan *before* anyone got hurt. I feel like this was all my fault."

"You can't blame yourself, Silverpaw." Skysong answered. "StarClan can hardly expect an apprentice barely a week into their training to know how to interpret their cryptic messages. And besides, you tried your best to help cats when it mattered. That is what truly counts."

Silverpaw looked at her mentor. Tears running down her face, she nodded. The feeling of guilt and despair slowly disappeared, replaced by hope for the future.

"If you have any more dreams, let me know. We need to tell Bramblestar and Herbfeather as soon as possible."

Eventually, they moved on with their hunting. Silverpaw even managed a spectacular leap in a tree to catch a thrush, certainly a feat showing her improvement in hunting. After delivering the

thrush to the elders, Sourfur and Cinderfall, she picked a plump mouse of the fresh kill pile and began eating her well earned dinner.

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That night, Silverpaw sat at the edge of camp beneath the open sky, watching the sun set. The sky on the edge of her vision was a mix of pink, blue, and yellow. The colors of dusk.

The flood had brought disaster to MistClan. The next might bring something far worse.

She looked up at the stars and whispered into the stillness, "I'm still listening. Show me what to do."

Leaves stirred softly in the night wind.

Silverpaw thought she heard a voice, an evil voice, like the slither of a snake among rustling bushes. It was speaking of horrors to come.

Behind her, the camp lay quiet. Safe. For now.

End of Part Two! Hope you have enjoyed so far as it takes a lot of effort to publish chapters daily!

Also, don't be afraid to give me feedback I know I'm not the best writer so if you could comment on my mistakes/redundancies/ missed story opportunities that would be great <3

I'm taking a short break, but if all goes well Part Three will be out Thursday!

Part Three Cover Art

[image]

Chapter Thirteen out tomorrow!

Chapter Thirteen: Terrible Tales

A dark shadow followed Halfbone as he entered the den. "We've sent messengers into the forest as you've asked." He told his leader.

Darkmoon turned to face his subordinate. "I do not *ask*, I order." He responded in a threatening voice. "Go tell our guest to send his message. It's time we stir up this gentle pond."

Halfbone nodded meekly and exited the cramped den in a hurry to obey his leader's commands.

Darkmoon smiled as the retreating cat blocked the light entering the small cave. Soon, his plan will be in full swing. Soon he will be able to enact his revenge. Soon...

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Silverpaw opened her eyes but, instead of seeing the earthy ceiling of the apprentice's den, she was in the clearing of the camp, below the High Tree. Looking around her, a horrible sight met her eyes.

There were many cats around her. They were making horrible gurgling noises. It sounded as if they had a hairball stuck in their throats, but it was made of slime instead of hair. Looking at them, they had boils and cuts across their bodies, as if they had beaten themselves to near death.

Among them, Silverpaw could see many cats she knew. She saw Berrypaw and Pebblepaw, writhing in pain on the floor. Her

mother, Springleaf, and Honeydrop with her unborn kits yelping in distress. Many more she could not bear to look at ripped at her soul.

Just as Silverpaw realized this, she became aware of a revolting smell. It smelled of rot. Rotten apples in particular, but with an added hint of a burnt taste, like embers from a flame.

Turning towards the High Tree, she saw a cat atop it. However, it was not Bramblestar, but a wise looking tom with a shining coat, almost the color of sunset. As he opened his mouth, a familiar voice echoed through her head:

"The breath of the forest will sour,
what once was healthy will wither.
One step closer to the end of the start,
for the weak will fall for forever."

Before Silverpaw could say a word, the cat vanished, leaving behind but a single tear as her head swam, vision getting darker and darker, before she passed out completely.

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The days after the Gathering had passed slowly. The forest began to dry as green-leaf turned to leaf-fall. With MistClan back in their territory, AppleClan could finally rest.

Yet Silverpaw had a looming feeling that all was not as calm as it seemed. Something important was on the horizon. Something deadly. Something life changing.

But Silverpaw was a bit more preoccupied. She'd tried to ignore it. To brush it off as just a dream. But she couldn't. Not after what happened to MistClan. Not with that stench of rot still rising now and then from the riverbank. Not with the faint cough she'd started hearing from the nursery.

She had to tell someone.

"You want to speak to Bramblestar?" Thornfur asked, eyes flicking over her with mild surprise. "She's free now, but make it quick. She has more important things to do than talk with apprentices."

Silverpaw dipped her head and padded to the High Tree. Bramblestar sat beneath it, grooming her chest fur.

"Silverpaw," she said without looking up. "What is it?"

"I had a dream," Silverpaw said, hesitating. "A dream from StarClan. A warning."

That caught Bramblestar's attention. She looked up, her emerald gaze sharp.

"A dream?" she repeated. "You're not a medicine cat."

"I know," Silverpaw said quickly. "But I think it was real. I've had two of them now. The first was about water. Then the flood happened. And now there's another. About sickness."

She recited the prophecy, her voice low.

When she finished, Bramblestar was silent, her eyes inspecting the young cat in front of her.

Then she snorted softly. "You're exhausted, Silverpaw. The flooding, the rescue... it's been a lot. You're strong, but you're still young. StarClan doesn't burden apprentices with omens. Not unless there's a reason."

"But what if their is?" Silverpaw insisted. "What if they chose me?"

"Then let them speak clearly," Bramblestar said flatly. "Until that happens, focus on your training. AppleClan needs apprentices, not prophets."

Silverpaw left with her tail low, heart pounding. She wasn't sure what answer she'd expected, but dismissal still stung. *Was* she getting prophecies? Of course she was, that dream was real... If only

more cats believed her than just Skysong. She felt so alone.

That evening, she crept into the medicine den. Herbfeather was sorting herbs in neat little piles. She looked up, blinking in the low light.

"Silverpaw? Did you hurt something?"

"No," she said. "But I need to talk to you. About a dream."

Herbfeather listened carefully as she repeated it again, quieter this time.

When Silverpaw finished, she was silent for a long moment. Herbfeather had a look of understanding on her face.

"Prophecies aren't meant for just anyone," she said at last. "They come to medicine cats for a reason. We're trained to interpret them, to know the signs."

"So you don't believe me."

"I didn't say that," she replied. "I believe you. Did I ever tell you that once, when you were just a kit, you told me about a dream you once had?"

Silverpaw was surprised. "I did?"

"Yes." Herbfeather replied fondly. "You told me a prophecy. One that I knew was coming. Unfortunately, I decided to ignore it. I thought it too crazy for a little kit like yourself to be getting dreams from StarClan."

As Silverpaw processed this information, Herbfeather continued. "But we are wasting time. We need to prepare."

She looked suddenly serious. "If a disease is really coming, we need to be ready for it. Go get some rest, I'll need both you to help collect herbs."

"I will, Herbfeather. And... thank you for believing me. I really appreciate it."

With that Silverpaw headed for her nest to get a good night's sleep before the next day.

Poor Silverpaw, everything always happens to her D:. Almost like she's the main character... I know this chapter is longer than usual, but I felt it was needed! Hope you enjoyed!

Next chapter tomorrow!

Chapter Fourteen: Scents

A full moon had passed since the Gathering. The days grew colder as leaf-bare started to set in. The flood was pushed to the back of cats' minds, turning into a memory.

But not for Silverpaw.

She sat eating skinny mouse at dawn, watching a pair of warriors leave camp with empty bellies. Food had been harder to catch these past few days. Not only was prey scarce—but it didn't always smell right.

She had overheard Pebblepaw yesterday whispering that his squirrel had tasted off, like old bark.

Pebblepaw. Hmm. It had been a while since Silverpaw had talked to him. Their relationship had grown thin, and she felt like he was avoiding her. Whenever Silverpaw tried to talk with him, he had always found an excuse to leave, or he simply seemed to disappear the moment she turned her back.

Speaking of Pebblepaw, she could see him talking with Silentleaf once again. *They seem to do that a lot.* Silverpaw thought. *I wonder what they talk about.*

She felt a sense of unease growing again, curling under her skin like thorns. Let him talk with his mentor. She had more concerning matters.

The breath of the forest will sour, she thought grimly. *What once was healthy will wither...*

"Silverpaw!" Skysong's voice snapped her back. The white she-cat padded over, carrying two bundles of moss. "Come on. Help me refresh the bedding in the nursery."

Silverpaw finished her mouse and followed her without a word.

Inside the nursery, warmth and soft light filled the air. Honeydrop was curled in her nest, belly heavy with kits. She blinked at them sleepily.

"Thanks, Skysong. The moss was starting to smell like wet feathers." The queen said. "Hello Silverpaw, how have you been?"

"Good, thanks." She responded. "Do you know when the kits are coming?"

Honeydrop chuckled. "It could be any day now. Herbfeather said there could be as many as four!"

"Wow, that's a lot of kits." Skysong popped in. "Are you sure you can handle that many?"

"I'll have Herbfeather and Springleaf to help, don't worry about me." She responded with a smile.

They left the nursery shortly after. Silverpaw took the old moss outside and buried it. When she returned, she caught a faint rasping cough. She paused.

Even though Honeydrop's kits hadn't been born yet, the cough had sounded too rough for a queen.

"Did you hear that?" she asked Skysong.

Her mentor nodded slowly. "She's been coughing since last night. Herbfeather's keeping an eye on it."

"And she's not the only one," said a new voice. Shinepaw approached, a mouse in her jaws. She dropped it and lowered her voice. "Sourfur hasn't left his nest since yesterday. Berrypaw said he's barely eaten. He thinks he's caught something."

Silverpaw's ears twitched. "Has anyone told Bramblestar?"

"I think Herbfeather has. But..." Shinepaw looked down. "I don't think she's worried yet."

"Could it be greencough? I thought it was too early..."

They fell silent, a shadow creeping into the bright morning.

Silverpaw realized with a pang of guilt she had not told Skysong about her dream yet. "Skysong?" She started, after Shinepaw had left.

"What is it, Silverpaw?" She responded with a curious look on her face.

"I need to talk to you," Silverpaw looked around anxiously,"... privately."

When they were alone, She told Skysong everything. About the new prophecy. The disease. Even the cat who delivered the message, whom she believed was her father. It turned out, Skysong didn't have much to say.

"Make sure you mention this to Herbfeather if you haven't already." She responded. "Otherwise, we just have to hope to StarClan it's not as bad as it sounds."

Later that day, Silverpaw visited the medicine den. Herbfeather was sorting dried leaves into bundles. The scent of catmint and tansy filled the air—but beneath it lingered something else. Something wrong.

"Silverpaw," Herbfeather said, without looking up. "You're not sick, are you?"

"No," she said. "But is someone else?"

Herbfeather paused. "A few cats have picked up coughs. It could be greencough—or just dust from the flooding."

Herbfeather looked tired, like she hasn't slept in days. "I haven't said anything to the others yet, but some herbs aren't working like they used to. I give tansy, and the cough lingers. I give marigold, and wounds fester anyway."

Silverpaw swallowed hard.

"Do you think it's the prophecy?" she whispered.

Herbfeather gave her a long, unreadable look. "I don't know. But if it is... we need to be more prepared than ever. Do you have any idea what the disease could be?"

Silverpaw told Herbfeather all she could remember about her dream-the visual symptoms, the smell, the cat's muffled cries for help.

Herbfeather nodded warily. "I think I know what could help. It's rare, but I know a spot we can find some. Meet me here tonight at Moonhigh, I'll need you and Skysong both to help."

Silverpaw nodded her understanding, wondering at what the illness could be.

That evening, the air turned thick and hot. Silverpaw couldn't rest. She left the apprentice's den and sat near the entrance to camp.

Singepaw came through the thick bushes that covered the entrance, a plump squirrel in his mouth. Looking at each other with contempt, Silverpaw continued watching him long after the exchange.

Above her, the birds in the branches sang to each other. Another sound reached her ears—soft, weak coughing from the elder's den. And then... a second one. Different den. Different cat.

She closed her eyes.

It had begun.

It seems a sickness might be coming guys. Will they find a cure? Will they get these oh so vital herbs? You'll have to wait until next time!

Edit: If I'm wrong about those herbs, by the way, please tell me as I'm not all that knowledgeable. Happy fourth of July if your American!

Chapter Fifteen coming tomorrow!

Chapter Fifteen: Shadows

The forest was silent beneath the pale moon. Silverpaw crept from the apprentice's den with her paws light on the damp earth. The stars blinked faintly overhead, but the moon was hidden behind drifting clouds, casting the world in shifting shadows.

Herbfeather stood waiting near the camp entrance, her tail flicking with anticipation. Silverpaw padded up next to her.

"Skysong can't come, we're on the dawn patrol and Thornfur wants everyone on full alert."

Herbfeather raised a barely-existent eyebrow before responding. "And why are you here then?"

"Well, someone has to help you." She responded. "And anyways, nobody will notice if an apprentice is a little sleepier than usual."

Herbfeather nodded and motioned her to follow before heading toward the entrance to camp.

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As they traveled through the forest, Silverpaw realized she had no idea what they came for. "What *are* we looking for?"

"Feverfew, chervil, and redroot," Herbfeather said. "And something else... something StarClan showed me long ago but I've only seen once. It grows near the Pine Hollow. If this sickness is as bad as I think, we'll need it."

Silverpaw shook with sudden fear at the thought of the prophesied disease. If it had Herbfeather scared, it must be bad.

The sounds of the forest were hushed. Even the usual night birds were quiet, making the silence nearly overwhelming. It gave Silverpaw a sense of mystery and foreboding she did not like.

They reached the old bramble patch first. Chervil leaves gleamed faintly in the dark.

"Silverpaw, gently," Herbfeather said, as they approached it. "Take only the healthy leaves."

Silverpaw obeyed, moving slowly, delicately plucking the leaves off the plant. The scent of chervil was sharp and fresh, but something lingered underneath. A faint bitterness. Not rot—but close.

They gathered in silence. When she decided they had enough, Herbfeather nodded. "To the Pine Hollow."

The Pine Hollow stood with their silhouettes blotting out the sky. Their trunks rose tall, and the trees themselves grew so close together at times it could be hard to find an opening in the underbrush. No birds called here. Even the wind seemed to hush.

Silverpaw followed Herbfeather down a narrow path between two mossy boulders. She felt her fur prickle. The air here was colder, heavier, purer.

"There," Herbfeather breathed.

A cluster of strange plants grew in the hollow between roots—slender stems with purplish-green leaves and small white blossoms. The scent was unlike anything Silverpaw had smelled before. Sweet at first, then sharp—like lightning in the air.

"What is it?" She asked.

Herbfeather hesitated. "We called it *spiritroot*. My mentor said it only grows where StarClan once walked. It might be the only thing that can stop a sickness like this."

Silverpaw had the feeling they were not alone in the forest. Out of the corner of her eye, she thought she saw movement for a split second, but as she looked she saw nothing.

There was nothing, she knew she was just being paranoid.

"Come on, Silverpaw, lets gather these so we can move on to the redroot and feverfew." Herbfeather called.

Silverpaw helped dig around the roots while Herbfeather carved them cautiously out of the ground. The ground was soft, too soft—like it had rained here recently, though the air was dry.

By the time they neared completion, moonhigh was over and the moon was almost set.

Herbfeather looked up at the sky. "We can't collect all the herbs at this rate." She noticed. "With the speed of which this disease could be coming, I'd rather not have to come back out here."

Silverpaw nodded knowingly. She knew the disease that plagued her thoughts could come any time in the next few moons.

"Tell you what, Silverpaw, you move on to collecting feverfew. There should be a small stream about that way with some." Herbfeather pointed her tail towards a seemingly random direction.

"I'll finish up here and be right behind you."

Silverpaw gave her a nervous look before replying. "Ok, Herbfeather, if I get into trouble I'll yell." She headed off, weaving her way through the thick trees.

Now alone, the forest seemed especially creepy and uninviting. The dark pine trees appeared to lean in on her, blotting out those comforting stars she loved to gaze at. It seemed to be devoid of wildlife or even any wind.

Suddenly, Silverpaw heard the snap of a twig behind her. *Did Herbfeather finish already?*

She spun around, but instead of seeing the kindly medicine cat Silverpaw was staring into the faces of three unknown warriors. It was hard to make out their features in the dark despite the nearly full moon.

The first one was a she-cat who had dark grey fur with a scar across one eye, rendering it useless. The other two were toms with

lighter grey coats that seemed almost identical. All three had many scars and cuts all across their bodies, as if they were regularly injured.

"Uh, who are you three? Your on AppleClan territory, you know!" Silverpaw said with courage she did not feel.

"Aw, isn't that cute?" The she-cat responded in a mocking voice. "The little prophet thinks she can tell us what to do."

The two toms behind her cackled with laughter, their voices echoing off the trees ominously. "What a shame," the she-cat continued. "You would have made *such* a good warrior. But no, you were *chosen*." She smirked at her evily.

Silverpaw shook, not just with fear, but tremendous anger. "Don't talk to me that way. I'm stronger than you know!"

Leaping forward, Silverpaw slashed at the feline in front with a vengeance. Howling in pain, she staggered back as blood spurted out.

"You'll pay for that!" The dark pelted cat yelled as she prepared to claw Silverpaw's face off.

"Stop." A deep voice she had heard only in dreams vibrated through the forest. "I want her alive."

:O □□□. I wonder who it could be? What do they want from her? Who even are these cats? Thanks for reading so far, I really enjoyed writing this chapter and I hope you enjoyed reading it!

Next chapter out tomorrow!

Chapter Sixteen: Deceased

Real quick I just wanted to say thank you for 100 reads! I know I'm late but I write these very far ahead so here we are. <3 hope you enjoy!

Meant to publish this on Sunday so if you saw it Saturday sorry!

Silverpaw gasped as a wave of fear and panic flooded through her. This could not be happening. It shouldn't be possible!

That voice—low and poisonous, like the wind through dead trees—rippled through the forest.

"I want her alive," it said.

The scarred she-cat flinched, ears flattening. "Yes, Darkmoon."

From the shadows behind her, a shape emerged. It walked like a cat, but its fur shimmered like smoke. His eyes glowed with a cruel fire, and when he smiled, Silverpaw's heart dropped.

Darkmoon.

But—how?

He had been in her dreams. In StarClan's warnings. But that's just it. Her *dreams*. He wasn't real. He was supposed to be dead, in the dark forest.

"You..." she whispered.

Darkmoon stepped forward with quiet grace. "You're surprised. You thought I was a ghost. A nightmare. But no, Silverpaw. I can walk your forest just as you do. I bleed. I strike. And I've been waiting to meet you... face to face."

The scarred she-cat chuckled. "Cute, isn't she? All wide-eyed and heroic."

"You're not supposed to be here," Silverpaw said, her voice trembling. "You're from the Dark Forest."

Darkmoon's smile widened. "Like that would let that stop me."

The gray toms flanked him now, closing in. "You've interfered too much, little prophet," Darkmoon said. "The disease is only the beginning. The Clans' suffering is just the first step. But you... You might spoil everything."

"I'm not afraid of you," Silverpaw hissed, lowering into a crouch even as her legs shook.

"You should be," Darkmoon said softly.

The three warriors lunged.

Silverpaw darted sideways, claws flashing, but one of the toms struck her flank. She stumbled, and pain seared up her side. Before she could rise again, something crashed through the underbrush with the force of lightning.

A blur of sunset.

The tom barreled into the nearest attacker, sending him flying. The air erupted with snarls and yowls as the new cat fought like fury itself. He was dusk-furred, built strong and yet nimble. His movements were fast, too fast for any normal warrior.

Silverpaw's eyes widened with shock. "No... I've seen you too. It can't be."

The warrior didn't answer. He was already slamming one of the twin brothers into the roots of a tree. He spun, met the scarred she-cat mid-leap, and drove her back in a flash of claws and teeth.

Darkmoon snarled. "Duskpelt, you were supposed to stay in camp. I guess I need to talk to Halfbone about security."

That name. Duskpelt.

That name seemed dreadfully familiar to Silverpaw, as did the cat it belonged to.

Duskpelt turned his head for just a moment. "Run, Silverpaw!"

She hesitated—but she couldn't look away. "You're dead," she whispered. "Am I dead too? I saw you in StarClan. You can't be here!"

"Now is not the time!" He yelled as a grey tom jumped at Silverpaw. In such a shocked state, she did nothing but stand there and was knocked over, getting nearly pinned.

Her instincts finally kicking in, Silverpaw clawed her attacker's exposed belly, opening a long, deep wound in it. He yowled in pain before falling backwards

She could see Duskpelt fighting Darkmoon single-pawdly, however the she-cat was closing in from behind. Preparing to leap, Silverpaw gathered her muscles before springing onto the Tom's would be attacker.

They screeched their pain before roughly shaking Silverpaw off, landing gracefully behind Duskpelt, earning a brief respite.

Unfortunately, Darkmoon's warriors were closing in on all sides. Silverpaw knew she was going to die here. But she was determined to bring as many of these hell-cats down with her.

Suddenly, the darkness began to fade as daylight streamed through the thick pine trees surrounding them. Darkmoon, who had backed off of his opponent, had a look of horror and fury in his face.

"The moon is setting," one of the light grey toms exclaimed. "The sun will soon be up! We have no time."

With one final, hate filled glance at the pair of cats before him, Darkmoon turned and ran back into the thick of the forest yelling behind him:

"This is not over! We will be back when the moon is full and there is nocat left to defend this land!"

And with that, him and his fellow felines darted back through the trees.

Silverpaw let out a massive sigh of relief, but her mind was still processing what just happened. Looking over to Duskpelt, she could see he had many nasty wounds, some of which looked like they should have killed him.

Duskpelt limped over to her. "Are you ok?" He asked worriedly.

"You saved me," she said quietly.

His gaze softened. "Of course I did. You're my daughter."

The words hit like thunder.

Silverpaw blinked. "What?"

"I never got to tell you while I was alive. I watched you grow, even after death. I always wanted to protect you, but I wasn't allowed to interfere. I haven't managed it until now."

Tears welled in her eyes. "You're my father..."

He nodded.

"But, I don't understand. How are you here? Where were you when I was a kit? And... Are you going to leave again?"

Duskpelt smiled a sad smile. "I can't answer all your questions right now, but just know, I love you, and I always will. I watch over you from the stars." As he talked, his body was slowly evaporating into mist.

Before she could say more, a rustling came from the trees. Herbfeather burst through the undergrowth, breathless.

"Silverpaw!" she cried. "Are you—" She stopped short, staring at Duskpelt's fading form.

"Herbfeather," he said. "Keep her safe. She's the only one who can stop what's coming."

Then, like mist in morning sun, he vanished. Silverpaw stood still, heart full of grief, awe, and something new-purpose.

Herbfeather stepped closer. "Was that...?"

"Duskpelt," Silverpaw said softly. "My father."

They stood together in silence, staring at the place he had stood.

Herbfeather mumbled, "Let's go home."

Wow, that was a lot to unpack! Didn't mean for the herb-gathering to turn into two whole chapters, but I guess looking back on it it was dumb not to... Hope you enjoyed this lore filled chapter!

Chapter Seventeen out tomorrow!

Chapter Seventeen: Breath

Silverpaw raced through the trees, evil cackling echoing through her mind. As she reached a clearing, she realized there was nothing but a ledge with a massive drop below.

Spinning around, Silverpaw felt chills run down her spine as the terrifying figure of Darkmoon appeared, made even more so as he was at least twice his usual size.

"Here you die, daughter of Duskpelt!" He said with a humorously evil laugh. "Your father isn't here to save you this time."

As Darkmoon advanced Silverpaw turned towards the cliff once more before being blinded by the shining rays of the sun. She stumbled and, losing her balance, fell off the ledge down to the rocks below.

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"Hey, wake up!" Silverpaw felt somecat nudge her awake. Glancing up, she recognized Berrypaw's ginger-red coat.

"You were twitching in your sleep," he said, nudging her gently with a paw. "Are you okay?"

Silverpaw sat up slowly, heart still hammering. "Just a nightmare," she mumbled, though the weight of it still pressed on her chest. "I'm fine."

"Well, get up soon," Berrypaw said, still giving her a concerned look. "Bramblestar's assigning patrols at sun-high."

Silverpaw gave a weak nod and stretched, casting a glance at the den's entrance. Dawn light filtered through the trees. Outside, she could already hear Shinepaw and Pebblepaw bickering over who got the bigger mouse from the fresh-kill pile.

As she padded out into the clearing, the familiar sounds of camp

greeted her—Cinderfall lecturing Singepaw on how to check for fox scent, Sourfur complaining about his nest again, and Skysong talking quietly with Herbfeather by the medicine den. For a moment, it all felt normal.

But Silverpaw knew it wasn't.

AppleClan felt calm on the surface, but underneath... Silverpaw could feel the tension growing like a storm cloud. Prey was still thin.

Herbfeather had convinced Bramblestar to send out two more herb patrols since their encounter in the woods. Sourfur's cough hadn't gone away. The scent of death still lingered faintly on the breeze if you knew what to smell for.

And then there were the Clans.

At the last Gathering, which Silverpaw had skipped since it was the day after their midnight herb gathering, EmberClan had made it clear they thought AppleClan was weak. "Too small," Falconstar had said. "Too soft. A clan of healers and outcasts."

MistClan had remained silent, but Berrypaw told Silverpaw she had caught the glance their leader gave Bramblestar—an unspoken warning: You're running out of time.

Silverpaw thought once more about the prophecy.

"The breath of the forest will sour,
what once was healthy will wither.
One step closer to the beginning of the end,
for the weak will fall for forever."

It was clear to her that a sickness was coming, not only from the prophecy but also her dream. No, it wasn't that she was confused about. It was the last two lines.

"One step closer to the beginning of the end." What did that even mean? It sounded like a warning of things to come...

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Later that morning, Silverpaw joined Shinepaw near the elders' den to re-line Sourfur's nest. Shinepaw was surprisingly quiet, nose twitching as she worked.

"You okay?" Silverpaw asked.

Shinepaw hesitated. "I'm tired. The apprentices are doing everything lately. Berrypaw's too moody, Singepaw's always off trying to impress the warriors, and Pebblepaw... I don't know what's up with him."

Silverpaw didn't reply. She knew Pebblepaw had been distant. Ever since her dreams started, he'd stopped talking to her. He barely even met her eyes anymore.

"I think he's scared," Shinepaw continued, like she'd read Silverpaw's thoughts. "He doesn't understand what's happening. None of us do."

Silverpaw nodded. "But it's real. Something's coming. I can feel it." She didn't actually know what was going on with Pebblepaw, but it saddened her every time she saw him.

Shinepaw looked at her, uncertain. "I believe you. I think. I just hope we're ready."

That afternoon, Skysong took Silverpaw out for battle training. They practiced on the soft forest floor near the gorge, where the grass thinned and the ground was dry. Silverpaw struggled to focus, her mind drifting.

"Eyes up," Skysong said, batting gently at her shoulder. "A distracted cat is a dead one."

"I'm not distracted," Silverpaw grumbled, crouching again.

"You are," Skysong said lightly. "It's ok. Whatever comes, we can work through it together."

Silverpaw didn't answer. She didn't know how to explain the dreams, the fear, the pressure of being chosen by something bigger than herself. How do you explain to someone that you're fighting ghosts?

As the sun dipped low, Silverpaw joined her den mates near the edge of camp. Shinepaw lay sprawled on a flat stone, soaking up the last warmth of the day. Berrypaw sat nearby, sharpening his claws on a fallen log. Pebblepaw was there too, for once, watching the sky.

"It's quiet tonight," Shinepaw murmured. "Too quiet."

Silverpaw looked at the stars as they blinked into the darkening sky. Somewhere up there, Duskpelt was watching. Her father. That word still felt strange in her mouth.

She wondered if she'd ever see him again, in flesh and blood. She prayed to StarClan she could.

Silverpaw heard worse coughs than usual, more aggressive. It was beginning.

The four apprentices sat in silence, side by side. The stars above didn't speak, but Silverpaw swore they were listening.

Darkness was falling fast.

What a nice, calm chapter before chaos unfolds :D. I wonder how this will play out considering AppleClan is already the smallest clan.

I'm currently going through a bit of a writing block, I know what to write overall and really want to but it's hard for me to sit down and do it. As such, I have to decrease uploads until I get some inspiration.

Next chapter out wednesday!

Chapter Eighteen: Sunset

Petalpaw sighed. Another cat was coughing, boils forming across their body. If the disease continued to spread through the camp this way, there would be too few cats left.

Rosewing, her mentor and the Clan's medicine cat, was darting around the den. Only the sickest cats were sent here, since the rest were needed to hunt, patrol, and serve the clan despite their illness.

She had a worried look on her face, and for good reason. This was a sickness unlike either of them had ever seen.

It spread like wildfire, tortured like greencough, and killed as quick as deathberries. They could find no cure with the herbs they had.

"Rosewing, what is happening?" Falconstar asked as he entered the den. "What is this sickness, and why isn't it cured."

"I don't know!" She exclaimed. "I've tried every remedy I can think of, but nothing works!"

"This disease will wipe us out if we do nothing."

Rosewing gave him an exasperated look. "You know it crushes my soul every time a cat dies. I'm trying my hardest, but I'm afraid there might just be no cure."

Petalpaw snuck out of the medicine den, leaving them to their squabble. Precious few cats were walking about the clearing now, and even they looked sick and unhealthy.

EmberClan was at its weakest. Petalpaw knew if they could not find a cure, it could mean the end not just of her clan, but of them all.

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Silverpaw was angry. She was angry at Herbfeather, at Springleaf, but most of all, angry at Bramblestar.

The sickness was sweeping through the camp. Almost every day, another cat came down with a cough. Wildnose, Cinderfall, even Springleaf were already confined to the medicine den.

But still, Bramblestar refused to admit Silverpaw was right. She insisted that it was just greencough, and ordered Herbfeather to treat it as such. Silverpaw had tried to warn her, but the leader still disregarded her.

Silverpaw thought Springleaf would support her, but she only scoffed at her daughter's ridiculous notions.

And in her opinion, Herbfeather was being just as unhelpful. She had tried to help, of course, but without spiritroot her attempts were wholly ineffective. And Herbfeather refused to give the much needed root without her leader's permission.

All in all, Silverpaw was fed up with the clan. The only one that truly stood by her side was Skysong.

"Give them time," She had said. "Bramblestar cannot ignore you forever."

So Silverpaw waited. It had been a little more than two moons since she had become an apprentice. She was learning more every day. Catching prey was starting to become less of a challenge and more of a chore.

Her battle skills were going to be assessed that day. Silverpaw and Skysong headed out of the camp at sunhigh accordingly. They met her opponent at the training hollow. It was Morningfire.

"How about we see how much you have learned." He said. "Are you ready?"

Silverpaw gulped. "Yes."

Suddenly, she heard a bush rustle to her right and before she could react, a cat hurled out of it, straight into her.

Letting herself get rolled a distance, Silverpaw jumped to her feet before she came to a complete, vulnerable stop. Looking at her new, revealed enemy, she saw Windwhisker, Bramblestar's mate and a quick, respected warrior.

Leaping at him with sudden aggression, Silverpaw swept a paw at him. Surprisingly, it collided with his shoulder, sending him backwards.

Windwhisker glanced at her quickly, a surprised look on his face. Silverpaw took this chance to charge at him once again.

Unfortunately, he cleanly sidestepped the hurried attack before lightly raking his claws across her hind leg. Silverpaw felt a sting of pain as it broke her skin, bleeding only slightly.

Spinning around, she was surprised to see he was nowhere to be found. Instead Silverpaw felt a great paw wack her from behind, concussing her slightly as it collided with her head. She stumbled forward before realizing she could not match his speed.

Instantly, Silverpaw leaped backwards, away from an incoming swipe of Windwhisker's paws. She took a defensive stance, ready for his next attack.

He jumped at her. Instead of backing down, Silverpaw ran forwards, sliding underneath him. She turned around and before he even hit the ground she was clinging onto the senior warrior's back.

The feeling of triumph flooded through her as Windwhisker struggled to throw her off, continuing to hold on until he stopped struggling. Instead, he fell backwards on his hind legs, crushing Silverpaw underneath him.

"Ow, ow ow!" She yelped, his weight squeezing her. "Get off!"

Windwhisker got to his feet and looked at the apprentice. "You

fought well for one so young. You surprised me with your quick reactions to my sudden attacks."

Silverpaw smiled despite her small injuries. Windwhisker was one of the clans more experienced warriors, and praise from him must show she really was quite good.

"However," he continued, "next time don't be so sudden to underestimate your opponent if you get the better of them once."

"I'll make sure not to." She answered humbly.

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As they made their way back to camp, Silverpaw realized it was quiet. Unnaturally quiet. There were no birds singing, no mice in the underbrush, even the wind seemed to have gone.

She felt like something was gone. Missing.

Despite the silence, Silverpaw felt happy. She couldn't wait to tell Springleaf and Berrypaw about the fight. And rub it into Singepaw's face, she smirked.

When they entered into the clearing, it was unnaturally quiet there, too. A crowd of cats were gathered around the entrance to the medicine den as stars peeked through the overhead canopy.

"What's going on?" Silverpaw asked a new rogue the clan had taken in.

The cat looked at her with a sad expression. "You should find out yourself."

Silverpaw pushed her way to the front and into the den. Inside, she saw her siblings, Bramblestar, and Herbfeather crowded around a nest.

"What is it?" She asked. Then she looked at the nest.

It was Springleaf.

Her body was still, her eyes closed. A nest of herbs lay around her, useless now.

She was dead.

OOOHHH NOOOOOOO- Hope you enjoyed the chapter, I'm trying to balance out the chaotic plot with Silverpaw's everyday life, hope it's working out!

Next chapter out Friday!

Chapter Nineteen: Midnight

The blood drained from Silverpaw's face. This could not be happening. Springleaf could not be dead. Not Springleaf, her caring, considerate mother. It couldn't be true.

The cats around her had tears in their eyes, inwardly mourning the lost cat. Berrypaw stood with a dark expression on his face. Pebblepaw lingered off to the side, half-hidden in shadow. Bramblestar tried to maintain her composure, but it was clear she was hurting. Herbfeather looked ashamed, as if it were all her fault.

Good, Silverpaw thought bitterly. *This is her fault—refusing to treat her for the disease we both knew was coming. I hope it tears her apart inside.*

Silverpaw leaned on Skysong, who had entered the den behind her. Tears streamed down both their faces as memories flooded Silverpaw's mind. Springleaf grooming her after a bad day, laughing as kits tumbled across the moss, whispering advice when Bramblestar wasn't listening.

But the sadness turned sharp. Grief gave way to fury as she thought about why Springleaf died.

Carelessness. Disbelief. Selfishness.

Bramblestar is a monster.

Rage surged through her like a flood.

"She was a good cat, loyal to the clan to the end." Bramblestar said, choking on the words. "AppleClan will not forget her contributions."

"Is that all you care about?"

Bramblestar looked at Silverpaw with shock. "You just care about

how good of a hunter, or a fighter she was? Is that all you wanted from her?"

"What? No!" Bramblestar said quickly. "She was important to me. She was—she had kits! You three!"

"That's all you care about! The Clan surviving. The Clan getting new kits. Did you ever stop to think about the cats themselves? You have ignored my visions, Bramblestar, and look what it has cost!"

Before anyone could stop her, Silverpaw spun around and bolted from the medicine den, pushing past the stunned cats in the clearing and vanishing into the trees.

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She didn't know where she was running.

The forest blurred past her, branches slapping her face, pine needles crunching underpaw. Her legs moved without thought, only pain and rage and grief filling her mind.

She ran until her paws ached and her lungs burned. Finally, she collapsed beneath a twisted oak deep in the woods, curling into a tight ball.

Alone.

The ache inside her was worse than any wound. Silverpaw pressed her face into the cold earth, her sides heaving. Springleaf was gone. And it was Bramblestar's fault. All of it.

Why did no one listen to me?

Above her, the stars shone almost as bright as the moon. A single dusk colored star stood out from the rest, seemingly bigger and brighter. She stared up at it, wishing desperately it was Duskpelt.

"Why did you leave me again?" she whispered into the night.

A patch of dark sky brightened as a new star emerged from the darkness next to the first. It was a pure, clear white. The two stars

neared each other, both looking down upon the young she-cat that gazed at them.

That night, Silverpaw cried herself to sleep, drifting in and out of consciousness. At one point, she dreamed Duskpelt sat beside her again, once more in a field of green grass. He brushed her ear with his tail.

"You may have a heavy burden to bear," he said. "But you must return to them. Your purpose is too important to ignore. Guide them, Silverpaw."

"But I can't!" The silver-pelted cat meowed back. "I don't know how to lead, and I can barely understand the prophecies StarClan sends me!"

Duskpelt smiled. "Do not worry, for we are with you, always."

As Silverpaw's gaze shifted, she saw her mother, Springleaf, standing beside him, a smile on her face.

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When she woke, the morning sun filtered through the trees, golden and quiet. Her fur was damp with dew, and her bones ached from sleeping on the cold ground.

She stood slowly. It was time to go back.

The camp was silent when she returned. Cats gave her mixed looks as she emerged from the entrance. They had relief in their faces, yes, but also... Fear.

Shinepaw was the first to approach her. Her expression was relieved, but also weary. "Silverpaw," she said gently, "follow me."

Silverpaw had a quick jolt of fear. Was Bramblestar angry at her? Was she going to get into trouble for walking out on her leader? Bramblestar had always been a patient, merciful cat, but Silverpaw was not sure if she had gone too far.

Herbfeather stepped from the medicine den, eyes hollow. "I'm

glad you're safe," she said quietly.

Silverpaw said nothing, following Shinepaw into the medicine den. She pushed her way past the cats to the nest where her mother had died—now occupied by a different body.

Cinderfall.

Her spotted pelt was dull. Her breathing had stopped. And Bramblestar stood vigil beside her, silent and broken.

Silverpaw stopped short.

The proud leader looked... smaller somehow. Her head hung low, eyes red-rimmed. Silverpaw approached with caution.

"I was wrong," Bramblestar whispered without looking up. "I should have listened to you. I should have believed Herbfeather. I just... I didn't want to believe the disease was something new. Something worse."

Silverpaw blinked. "You lost your mother."

Bramblestar nodded, silent tears dripping from her muzzle. "You lost yours too."

They stood together for a long time, the silence heavy with mourning.

"I'll allow the use of the spiritroot," Bramblestar said, choking on the words. "Whatever we need to do, we'll do it. We need to stop this disease before it kills more cats."

Silverpaw's heart hurt. She was still angry. Still grieving. But the fire inside her burned steadier now with purpose.

"We will," she said.

For Springleaf. For Cinderfall. For the future of AppleClan. She would protect them with her life.

Finally wrote this chapter, couldn't get myself to do it for days!

Bit of a sad note, but it really shows how Silverpaw has grown!

Next chapter Sunday!

Chapter Twenty: Sunrise

Silverpaw awoke. To what, she did not know this time. Then she realized: silence. There was no coughing, no sleepless rustles to be heard. The clan was finally at peace. No looming threat hung over them.

It had only been a few days since Herbfeather had begun treating the sick cats with spiritroot, but the change was obvious. They had quickly began to recover, and some had even gone back to their proper dens.

Silverpaw received no punishment. On the contrary, she was given the day off to mourn her mothers loss, even though the vigil had already taken place.

Berrypaw had been shocked by Springleaf's death. It seemed to her that the loving mother who had always taken care of her always would.

Silverpaw did what she could to comfort her sister, but it was apparent that Berrypaw did not want to talk about it. Instead, she spent her extra time sulking in the apprentice's den, or talking with Sourfur, a cross elder and now the only one AppleClan had.

Pebblepaw was similar. He always stiffened when somecat mentioned Springleaf. He dealt with it a different way, however.

Instead of sulking, he attacked his training with renewed vigor. If he was not seen with Silentleaf, practicing battle moves, he was training his hunting skills, or sparing with Singepaw, who had taken a liking to the young tom.

By the time training had resumed, Silverpaw felt things were looking, if not appealing, at least hopeful. Most of the time she was lost in thought, feeling like she should be able to do more for her siblings and clan.

Thus it startled her when Skysong walked up to her suddenly one evening.

"The gathering is tonight."

The gathering! She had totally forgotten about it. She was so deep in her thoughts, she had lost track of the days.

"This seems like it will turn out to be even more interesting than last time." Skysong said. "I wonder how the other clans are holding up with the disease."

"If they have it." Silverpaw added. Her mentor nodded, pondering the other clans' reactions.

"Well, be ready to go when Bramblestar calls." Skysong said, beginning to walk away. "I'm sure she will want to speak to you before we go."

Sure enough, an hour or two before Moonhigh, Bramblestar called Silverpaw into her den.

"You wanted me?" She asked, entering.

"Yes," responded the she-cat, "I wanted to apologize for how I've been treating you. As the leader of this clan, I should be open to any and all possibilities."

Silverpaw shuffled uncomfortably. "There is no need to apologize, Bramblestar. If anycat should, it should be me. I'm sorry I blamed you for Springleaf's death."

"Thank you, Silverpaw, I really appreciate it. Now go get prepared, I'll need you at the gathering tonight."

Wondering what that meant, Silverpaw exited the den, heading to the kill pile for a mouse before they left.

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As they entered into the clearing, Silverpaw felt a wave of shock go through her body. Their were a lot less cats here than last time.

EmberClan was already there, and since the two clans were not on good standings, they generally stayed apart.

"Hey, Silverpaw!" She heard a voice behind her. Turning, she found Petalpaw, the EmberClan apprentice, standing next to her. "Why weren't you at the last gathering?"

"Uh I, um..." Silverpaw stuttered, remembering the events of that night. "I stayed behind to talk with my father. We don't get much time together."

"Oh, ok! How has AppleClan been? We've had a horrible disease running rampant through our camp." The black and white cat shivered a little thinking about it.

"We had a disease too." Silverpaw felt another pang of sadness. "We lost some cats. But once we figured out the cure, it went away fast."

"Really?" Petalpaw sounded surprised. "What is it?"

Silverpaw did not know if she should be telling an enemy clan cat about AppleClan affairs. So she improvised.

"Oh, I'm sure Bramblestar will talk about it during the meeting." While they had been talking, MistClan and HollowClan had showed up, and the four leaders stood on the great oak.

"Looks like we are starting!" she said quickly, glad for an excuse to leave the feline. "See you after."

Silverpaw darted away, leaving a very confused Petalpaw behind. Settling in beside Skysong, she looked up to the leaders right as they called the meeting to start.

Ravenstar began with a frown. "HollowClan has been suffering from a devastating disease. It has killed three cats already;

Sagepaw, Redfur, and even our medicine cat, Sapwhisker. Fernfoot has taken over as medicine cat despite his inexperience."

The crowd of cats below him mumbled their sorrow at the news of so many deaths, but not surprise.

Did everyone have this disease?

Ravenstar took a breath and was about to continue, but Falconstar cut him off. "EmberClan has also been suffering from a disease. We have been lucky enough to lose nocat so far, but many are dangerously ill."

Here he looked at menacingly Bramblestar. "We have no knowledge of such a disease, and no way to cure it. If we cannot find a cure, it could mean disaster."

Bramblestar opened her mouth to speak, but Brookstar spoke up first. "MistClan has already lost two cats, Greystream and Minnowpaw to this sickness. We, too, know nothing, and hope AppleClan has a remedy."

All eyes in the clearing turned towards Bramblestar as she finally stepped forward in front of the other leaders.

"We have been facing this disease, the same as you, and have lost two cats. Springleaf, a mother, and Cinderfall, an elder." A few tears clogged Bramblestar's eyes for a second before she blinked them away.

"However, where you other clans have found more disease and strife, we have found a cure."

Bedlam erupted in the clearing. Shouts echoed, cats yelled trying to make their voices heard over the chaos. It took several minutes for order to be restored and Bramblestar able to finish.

"In fact, we had the cure before the disease even occurred, and it was only thanks to my own disbelief that we ever lost two cats in the first place."

Instead of an outburst, the clearing had complete silence. This

news shocked them speechless.

Falconstar broke the silence with a snarl. "You lie. That is impossible! How could you know beforepaw?"

Bramblestar smiled. "Because of one our apprentices. Silverpaw, please step forward."

Le Gasp! End of Part Three! She really is the main character, huh? Hope you enjoyed this chapter, seems I might have gotten past my writing block with a little help from chatgpt.

I 'd still like to keep updating roughly every other day however, as it is a lot easier on me and who knows how I'll feel about writing tomorrow!

Additionally, I'd like any and all feedback you'd like to give me, I know I've asked already but I feel like I could improve so much more.

Part Four and next chapter Thursday!

Headcannon

This is just some extra fun facts or ideas I had. If they don't line up with the story then the story is correct and I just made a mistake d:

1. The reason AppleClan is so small is because its a very new clan. It's founder, Applestar, was the leader before Bramblestar.

2. Speaking of Bramblestar, her father *was* Applestar. She learned a lot from him and if I ever write a prequel I feel like a lot of lore for it is already in this book!

3. Silverpaw was originally going to train as a warrior for a few moons before becoming a medicine cat apprentice (thus their early apprenticeship) since she was getting dreams, but I decided not to because it felt like it just wasn't her personality.

4. Pebblepaw was originally going to die so Silverpaw would have more of a reason to become a medicine cat, but again, it didn't feel right.

5. AppleClan and Wildnose are both names I got originally from a YouTuber named Seri! Pixel Biologist, they did a series on Warrior Cats: Untold Tales (My first interaction with the Warriors universe btw) and I just had to include it somehow. Go check them out if it sounds interesting!

6. Skysong and Brookstar's prefixes came from two other warrior cats fanfic (I'll link them if I remember to) that I really enjoyed.

7. In case you didn't notice, Silverpaw likes to look up at the stars at night. She does it a lot. Like a lot.

8. At first, this book was just a mental story I day dreamed about, but then I was like "you know what, lets write a fanfiction" so here we are.

9. Darkmoon calls himself Darkstar because he believes he was a leader when he was still alive. While this is debatable, StarClan does not recognize him as a leader and so did not give him nine lives. That's why they hate each other so much. If I every make a prequel this would probably be the main plot.

10. I took inspiration for the disasters from the nine plagues in the Bible, I can't say too much but the blood river is the flood + gross water and the diseases are the, ynow, disease.

11. The cover art for parts and the book is A.I. generated, not because I prefer it but because I can't draw to save my life D:

12. When Silverpaw was made an apprentice, she was 5 moons old. Her first gathering was when she was 5 moons 1 week and 2 days old. This third gathering (second she has gone to) she is 7 moons 1 week and 2 days old.

13. Darkmoon tries to take Duskpelt to the dark forest because of evils he did while he was alive, but StarClan does not let him because of why he did those evils. Again, if I make a prequel, this would be in it.

14. Duskpelt acts as StarClan's messenger to Silverpaw because he's her dad. Also some other reasons I can't say quite yet but just know he is very cool 😎

15. AppleClan is the smallest clan by far. While they only have about 18 cats, other clans have upwards of 20-25. It's mostly the other clan's respect for their healers and hospitality that keeps them safe, but their warriors are still some of the strongest.

16. Sourfur is Silentleaf's mother, but Sourfur has memory loss to some degree and so doesn't know. The clan doesn't tell her because it could cause permanent damage to remember.

17. Oh it's 4am I should probably go to sleep... Final fun fact: Windwhisker doesn't sleep. This is a joke but he doesn't sleep much and keeps watch most nights.

Part Four Cover Art

[image]

Pretend it says Part Four at the top xd

Chapter Twenty-One: Hope

Duskpelt crept through the undergrowth. It was dense, and it certainly did not help that his coat was as bright as it was, but he plowed on anyways. Branches and plants underpaw impeded his progress, but not his determination.

Hearing a nearby patrol of cats, Duskpelt immediately stopped moving. They would be looking for movement above all else, he knew. Best to lie still and hope they couldn't see him, than try move to somewhere else.

He could hear the cats' voices come into hearing range. "...Darkmoon have us patrol around camp? It's not like anycat would be dumb enough to try anything."

"I don't know, but don't call him Darkmoon, it's Dark*star."* said a second voice.

"Oh come on, Scarnose, it's not like anyone is listening." Responded the first.

A sudden rustle of leaves nearby scared Duskpelt for a moment before he realized it was a cat stepping onto the narrow path the patrol was on.

"You would do well to listen to your clanmate, Rotfang." A new, crackly voice said. "I will have to report this to Darkstar, you know."

"Oh, please don't, Halfbone!" Rotfang replied, almost begging. "He'd have my pelt if he knew."

Duskpelt could hear a grin in Halfbone's voice as he spoke. "All the better."

Grumbling ensued as the patrol resumed, moving too far to be

heard. Duskpelt took his chance to peek out of the bush he was hiding in and glance up and down the path. Nothing.

Crossing quickly, He managed to make it unseen through the remaining forest and to the camp's boundary wall. Duskpelt knew there was no point trying to find a hole in the thick hedge. Darkmoon must have had all of them patched after his little escape.

Instead, he climbed a nearby tree, something he learned during his life in the living world. This tree bent perfectly over the camp, allowing him to listen in on any open conversations and see nearly the whole clearing.

As if on que, Duskpelt saw a pitch black furred tom jump onto a rotten log. He heard the clear yell, saying "All cats old enough to kill a kit gather for a clan announcement."

Many cats streamed from half a dozen dens into the clearing, clearly desperate not to be the last. Once they had all arrived, Darkmoon began. "Today I have an important announcement to make. We have managed to block StarClan's connection with all the medicine cats!"

Shouts of celebration rang throughout the clearing, making it clear this had been a long time goal finally achieved. But Darkmoon was not finished.

"Soon, we will be able to enter the living world once again, as I have done before. But this time, we will not be limited to the full moon. We will be given so much more than that... So stand ready. The time to wait is almost over. The time to rule has come!"

A deafening chorus of approval and cheer met these words, and Duskpelt knew he would hear no more useful information that night. And anyways, he had to get back to StarClan immediately.

As he made his way back through the undergrowth, Duskpelt realized he didn't know what Darkmoon meant when he said they wouldn't be limited to the full moon. Surely, they couldn't go out during the day?

And of course, they couldn't have cut off StarClan's connection with the medicine cats completely, could they? Whatever the case, Duskpelt knew he could not allow it to take effect.

Otherwise, it could spell the end of the clans, and the beginning of a new start.

An evil start.

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Silverpaw hesitantly stepped forward. She could feel every eye in the clearing looking at her. She suddenly felt self-conscious about everything she was doing.

Bramblestar looked at her proudly. "Silverpaw has had two dreams now, in both of which she had prophecies. The first prophesied the flood and bad water, the second prophesied this disease."

"And why should we believe you?" Falconstar snapped back. "This apprentice isn't even a medicine cat!"

How he knew that, Silverpaw did not know. Looking around, she saw that Ravenstar was nodding his head in silent agreement. Brookstar looked sceptical. *They don't believe Bramblestar.* She thought.

"Because we have the cure!"

Was that me? Silverpaw thought, shocked. And yet the entire gathering of cats once again were looking at her, so she continued.

"Before even the first cat got a cough, I warned Herbfeather about the disease. Together, we gathered the necessary herbs needed to cure it. Once it came, we used it to cure the cats who got sick."

Silverpaw shook slightly before continuing. "Springleaf and Cinderfall... They died too quickly. We were too late to save them."

A short silence followed her words, making Silverpaw feel like shrinking back towards Skysong and never going to another gathering again.

"If you don't believe us, that's fine. You can go back to your clan without a cure, and watch them die." Bramblestar paused, letting that sink in. "Or, you can just accept the help we're trying to give you."

As each cat contemplated their choice, Silverpaw realized Bramblestar had played her bark well. They had no choice but to accept. And yet...

"No!" Falconstar yelped. "I refuse to accept help from a clan who can't even help themselves!" With that, he stormed off the Great Oak and out of the clearing, his clan following shortly behind.

Silverpaw caught the eye of Petalpaw as they left. There was something other that surprise in her gaze.

It was fear.

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The other clans had been smart enough to realize it was either this, or slowly die off one by one. And they had already lost enough to this disease.

AppleClan headed back to their camp, the mood lighter than when they had passed the other way. Sure, EmberClan had been too stubborn to accept help, but at least they would save lives in the other two clans.

"That could have went better." Silverpaw heard Skysong sigh.

"What did you think would happen?" Singepaw, who was walking near them, commented smugl. "Those proud, mouse-brained kittypets don't know a good thing when they see it."

"You know, not all of them are that bad." Silverpaw interjected.

Singepaw's eyes narrowed. "And how would you know that? You haven't been talking to one, have you?"

Silverpaw rolled her eyes and ignored him. Times were changing, chaos was unfolding, and yet, the clans still stayed separated and solitary.

But there was hope. She just had to believe in it.

:D. Sorry, just felt like it. I enjoyed this chapter, hope you did too, but poor EmberClan, having to be led by Falconstar. He's going to be the death of them D:

Next chapter out Friday!

Chapter Twenty-Two: Snowfall

The next moon passed in a haze for Silverpaw. The few cats that still had coughs were treated and soon recovered. The first snowfall of Leaf-bare arrived, and Silverpaw found it easier to hunt in the snow.

The day after the gathering, both MistClan and HollowClan sent their medicine cats to collect the cure. The thanks were many, as none of the other clans had the faintest clue how to cure the disease, and it could have led to many more deaths, although Silverpaw could tell they were reluctant to accept any help.

EmberClan, meanwhile, had made no attempt to reach out to AppleClan. Falconstar remained firm in his decision for them to take care of it themselves, and he did not seem to be changing his mind any time soon, to the dismay of many.

On the good side, Honeydrop's kits were born. Silverpaw heard the news from Berrypaw, who rarely got excited nowadays.

"Silverpaw!" The she-cat exclaimed. At the time, Silverpaw had been replacing Sourfur's bedding in the remarkably empty elder's den. "Honeydrop is having her kits! I wonder what their names will be."

Silverpaw felt a rush of excitement. "I wonder what they look like. A name needs to mean something, you know."

"We'll have to wait and see." Came the response.

They talked for a while longer as they headed to the nursery. As they approached, Morningfire exited the den with a grim smile on his face.

Silverpaw exchanged a glance with Berrypaw before padding over. "Morningfire?"

The tom jumped slightly, then blinked as if pulling himself out of a fog. "Silverpaw. Berrypaw." His voice was hoarse. "I didn't hear you."

"Is everything okay?" Berrypaw asked carefully.

Morningfire hesitated, then nodded. "Yes. I mean... yes, they're here. The kits. Four of them."

Silverpaw felt a rush of joy and warmth. "Really? That's amazing!"

A flicker of something—pride, fear, maybe both—crossed Morningfire's face. "Honeydrop's resting. She's exhausted, but strong. The kits are strong."

"Can we see them?" Berrypaw asked hopefully.

"Not yet," Morningfire said quickly, shaking his head. "They need time. They were early—too early, maybe. Herbfeather says they're small, especially the littlest one. We don't want too many cats around just yet."

Silverpaw's chest tightened as she remember ed her mother. "Is one of them sick?"

"Not sick," Morningfire said, though he didn't quite meet her eyes. "Just... fragile. Herbfeather says it's nothing serious. A bit of wheezing. Could be the heat, or the stress." He was trying to convince himself more than them.

"They'll be okay," Berrypaw said, more forcefully than she probably felt. "Honeydrop's a good mother. And they've got you."

"I hope that's enough," he murmured.

They stood together for a moment in silence. From inside the nursery came the softest sound—a tiny, mewling cry.

Berrypaw stepped back, ears twitching. "I guess we'll meet them soon."

Morningfire finally gave a small, tired smile. "You will. I promise."

As Silverpaw and Berrypaw turned to go, Silverpaw couldn't help but glance once more at the nursery. Something about that cry had sounded... thin. Like a voice carried away on the wind.

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Silverpaw did not have much time to contemplate Morningfire's concern, as her training had begun to ramp up. There were many thing for an apprentice to learn, and Leaf-bare only increased that amount.

At the moment, they were on the evening patrol with Thornfur and Branchwing, who had been released from the medicine den after being declared her healthy.

"How have you been feeling?" Silverpaw asked the reddish-brown cat.

Branchwing smiled at her. "Better, and thanks to you, I hear."

Silverpaw felt her pelt burn in embarrassment. "I was just serving the clan." She muttered. "It was Herbfeather who did the real healing."

"She would never have known if it wasn't for you."

And if I had figured it out sooner, maybe Springleaf would still be alive.

Before she could respond, a scream of pain cut through the peaceful atmosphere of the forest, causing the patrol to stop in it's tracks.

"Is that...?" Skysong started, but Thornfur cut her off.

"Herbfeather." He said with a quick, dark look at his companions. "Let's go."

They dashed through the trees, towards what sounded like quite the scuffle. Branches and snow fell on them as the group ran at top speed past.

Emerging from the undergrowth into a small, snowy clearing, Silverpaw gasped at the scene that stood unfolded before her.

Five cats were quarreling in front of them. One she could recognize as Herbfeather, an ear torn and bleeding, backed against a thick oak. An attacker, she saw, seemed to be a EmberClan warrior, one that Silverpaw had seen at both gatherings. A couple others looked vaguely familiar, but she did not have time to identify them before her Clanmates rushed forward. Silverpaw hesitated no more than a moment before joining them.

Immediately, their opponents turned to face the incoming AppleClan threat. Hisses and snarls filled the air as the two sides clashed. Silverpaw attempted leaped onto the back of one cats, a grey tom, before being swatted away by his paw.

Landing on her feet, she simply and unexpectedly rushed back into him, gaining the initiative and knocking him off his feet.

As they rolled through the snow, Silverpaw slashed at his dark furred-pelt before they halted, and suprisingly found herself to be on top when the stopped. Her opponent, however, was not fazed and took the moment of surprise to throw her off with his hind legs.

Yelping shortly in surprise, Silverpaw crashed to the floor, temporarily stunned, before being pinned down by a different foe, this one a ginger tabby.

"You should never have interfered." She heard the she-cat say as she pressed her paw on Silverpaw's neck. "Now you will suffer for it."

Despite her struggles, she could feel the strength of her enemy slowly overwhelm her. A sharp pain at her throat occurred, her eyes

starting to blur, the flash of battle blending with the white and brown of the surrounding forest.

Faintly, Silverpaw felt the weight of he captor lift as a short yell of surprise and anger echoed in her mind. But she had no reaction except confusion as she fell into the darkness that was consuming her.

Uh oh, that's not good. Oh well she's dead end of story D:. Hope you've enjoyed so far, I think I'm getting back into the groove of writing consistently!

Chapter Twenty-three out Sunday!

Chapter Twenty-Three: Dreams

Silverpaw gasped, air once more returning to her throat. It felt sweet after it's absence, like life after the taste of death.

Looking around her, Silverpaw could see she was no longer in a clearing in the middle of the forest. In fact, she was not in the forest at all. Surrounding her was clod snow for many fox-lengths, before a perimeter of thick thorns and bramble created a boundary encircling her, except for a little tunnel on one end.

Additionally, a big, scarred rock stood on the opposite end of the entrance, casting a shadow below it. Scattered around the clearing were small trees, and below them small holes in the ground leading into their roots ended in what Silverpaw could only assume were dens, as many cats were entering and exiting these holes.

Besides these cats, many more were bustling about, carrying herbs, eating prey, and sharing tongues. They all looked sickly and scarred, making Silverpaw shiver with fear as she realized where she was.

EmberClan's camp.

Despite being in the middle of such a busy area, nobody stopped to talk with her. Nobody questioned her, nobody even looked in her general direction.

Nervously, Silverpaw got up and walked towards a nearby cat laying in the little sun there was. Quickly, she gasped and realized it was Petalpaw, her friend. She looked sickly, bruises and cuts littering her body, making Silverpaw cringe when she thought of the pain the cat must be in.

"Hello? Petalpaw?" No response.

"Petalpaw?"

"She can't hear you." A voice from behind Silverpaw said. Turning, she smiled with relief, seeing Duskpelt standing there.

He was also smiling. "Silverpaw, how have you been? I've been too busy to talk with you these last moons."

"Good, but... I'm confused. Where are we? Why can't anyone hear us?" Silverpaw responded.

"Because we're not actually here." Duskpelt said, an understanding look on his face. "We are but phantoms, ghosts. They can't see, hear, or even feel us."

As he spoke, a limping tom cat walked through Duskpelt, not even flinching, eyes forward. Silverpaw's head spun with confusion, but she accepted it all as reality.

"Why am I here?" Was her next question. Duskpelt frowned slightly.

"Because you died. Or, almost did. I'm sure you would be in StarClan if you really had, but it was close enough, apparently. Anyways, you're still alive, don't worry, this is just a dream."

Silverpaw didn't know what to think. She almost died? It had felt so calm, just a slow drift into darkness... She shook her head. It did not matter right now.

Glancing at her father, Silverpaw began again. "You're telling me I'm not dead, but I'm in EmberClan's camp, seeing EmberClan cats, and you, but they can't see us?"

"Correct." He smiled. "You have always been clever."

That, for some reason, angered Silverpaw. She could feel her claws unsheath. "I've always been clever, have I? How would you know? You've been gone all my life."

Duskpelt immediately became ashamed. " I wish I could have, Silverpaw. Really, I do. But I couldn't."

"Why not?" The rage in her demanded.

"Because," The tom sighed. "I was banished."

Silverpaw gasped. *Banished*? A cat is only banished if they do something *really* bad. Something that endangers the entire clan to a point that said cat is a threat to their own clan.

"What were you banished for?" She asked.

Duskpelt did not meet her eyes. "I can't tell you. It's not something a living cat should learn from the dead."

"But you're my father!" Silverpaw exclaimed. "Why are you even here if you won't tell me anything."

He looked up again. "I came with a message." The dusk-colored cat walked over to Petalpaw, who was still sunbathing. "This disease is deadly. The only reason it did not kill more cats is you."

Silverpaw followed. "Me?"

"Yes," he nodded. "If you had not warned Herbfeather, many more cats would have died." Duskpelt dipped his head. "That being said, here is my warning. If you do not act quickly, many EmberClan cats will perish. Their lives lie with you."

Silverpaw felt the crushing weight of responsibility on her shoulders. Her father, however, much she wanted to resent him, had trusted her with this.

"I will try. What must I do?"

Duskpelt smiled thankfully. "Just convince Bramblestar to help them, you are the only one she will listen to. No matter how cruel or unforgiving she may become, you must stand by her side."

Silverpaw cocked her head at the thought Bramblestar could be cruel, but she nodded nonetheless. "Is that it?"

"Yes. Just one more thing. Tread lightly, for Darkmoon is gathering power. Be wary of his strength, or it might just overwhelm you."

And with that, Silverpaw's vision swam once again. The last sight she saw was Duskpelt, standing in a clearing of cats, looking lovingly at his daughter.

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Silverpaw woke up once again, but this time, she felt a searing pain at her throat. Coughing, she raised her head to peer at her surroundings before immediately laying it back down out of pain.

From what she could tell, she was in the medicine den. It smell like herbs, and Silverpaw could see the high tree quite easily out of the entrance. As a moan escaped her, she heard movement behind her as Herbfeather approached the injured apprentice.

"Silverpaw, thank StarClan you're awake! I'm sure the rest of the clan will be glad to know you're ok."

"What happened? And why does my neck hurt so much."

Herbfeather smiled. "That's a good sign. I'll give you some poppy seeds for the pain."

The medicine cat hummed about as she worked. Silverpaw felt the beginning of a headache as the pain and shock finally caught up to her body.

"Here, eat these." Herbfeather handed her some seeds.

Quickly eating them, Silverpaw asked again, "Now I've taken your herbs, what happened? Last thing I remember was you being attacked by a group of, I think, EmberClan warriors."

"Well, isn't that A little story." Silverpaw could hear the scowl in her voice. "I was scouring that clearing for whatever herbs I could find before true Leaf-bare came, when suddenly I was ambushed by four EmberClan cats."

Here Herbfeather shook her head in dismay. "I've gotten too rusty, too complacent. Anycat could have scented them from a mile away. My nose used to be much better than it is now..."

Silverpaw coughed, and Herbfeather took the hint.

"Anyways," the medicine cat said, "We fought a little, and they backed me into a tree. They tried to force me to tell them what the cure was, and when I refused they gave me this ear cut."

A deep scar ran across Herbfeather's ear, almost tearing it off, and though it had already been cleaned, it still looked quite painful.

"They really started to get mad, but that's when you four arrived. I refused to injure anyone too badly, of course, but I'd say I paid them back kindly. It wasn't looking too good at one point."

Herbfeather grimaced at the thought. "But thankfully, a hunting patrol was nearby and came to our aid. After that, we simply drove them off AppleClan land and carried you back to camp."

Silverpaw nodded. Then a thought struck her. "Herbfeather, who was the cat that saved me?"

The orange tabby grinned. "You mean from that she-cat? That was Singepaw. He saved you."

Ahhh this chapter is so long D:. My bad I started writing and couldn't stop... Anyways hope your enjoying so far!

Next chapter coming Wednesday!

Chapter Twenty-Four: Scars

Petalpaw frowned. Falconstar had forced them into this situation. If they had just listened and accepted help, so much death could have been avoided. And now here he was trying to blame AppleClan for it.

They were at the gathering, and Petalpaw could see the difference between EmberClan warriors and other clan's. They were covered in boils across their fur, and even smelt like disease. *And these are the healthiest ones.* She thought.

Falconstar and Bramblestar were on the Great Rock, bickering vehemently in front of the whole forest.

"You have given the other clans the cure, but refuse to give it to us? You claim to be the most compassionate clan, but you're really all just fox-hearts!"

Bramblestar's eyes narrowed as the crowd gasped. "I gave you a chance. I offered it to you the same as everycat else. No cat is responsible for EmberClan's many deaths except you."

Falconstar hissed. "That's a lot coming from a murderer."

Bramblestar gasped in shock. She looked ready to skin his pelt off. Before she could, however, Ravenstar intervened.

"This arguing is getting us nowhere. I would give EmberClan the cure myself but, given their attack on Herbfeather, it is only right that it is Bramblestar's decision."

Here he looked to Bramblestar, who was still glaring with hatred at the EmberClan leader. "They attacked our medicine cat and tried

to force her to help. They deserve no pity."

At this, Falconstar returned the menacing glare. The rest of the gathering continued as Brookstar stepped up nervously to report for her clan.

Petalpaw looked around the clearing after it finished. She wanted to tell Silverpaw some good news, but looking at the AppleClan cats, she realized maybe it wouldn't be the best idea to go wandering. Besides, her clan was leaving.

Catching up with them, Petalpaw looked back once more at AppleClan. There went their one hope for a cure.

Their hope for survival.

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Silverpaw's ears perked. There was a commotion in the nursery. She could hear kits crying, and concerned voices raised. She decided to wait and watch through the medicine den entrance as she ate a freshly caught mouse.

Her wounds were healing quite well, and though her throat throbbed it was not as much as it had been. The cut was healing over and her bruises lessened. The expert care of Herbfeather had done well.

Speaking of Herbfeather, Silverpaw watched as the cat exited the nursery and rushed over to her den.

"What is going on?" Silverpaw asked as she entered. "Is something wrong?"

Herbfeather didn't even spare a glance at her. "Nothing, I just need some herbs for the kits."

One of the kits, Bloomkit, had had a cough for days. Herbfeather

believed it could be greencough, but there was no further symptoms, so it was left alone.

As Herbfeather rushed back to the den, Silverpaw heard a meow of dismay. Their were some faint cries before it went silent. The only noise was the wind in the trees.

A sudden rustle could be heard as the group of cats that had gone to the gathering returned. There was a feeling of not only anxiety, but frustration. Bramblestar had a determined look on her face.

Two cats exited the nursery, Herbfeather and Silentleaf. They bore very grim looks. Trotting over to the new arrivals, Herbfeather whispered something to her leader, and they both re-entered the nursery.

Silverpaw waited once more. Soon enough, they emerged once more from the den, dark looks on their faces. Bramblestar padded silently onto the High Tree, shouting out to her clan.

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around the High Tree for a clan meeting."

Silverpaw contemplated getting up, but decided she could listen from the medicine den just as well as the clearing.

When all the cats had gathered beneath her, Bramblestar began. "Today is a day of sadness. I have lots news to report, none of it good. Firstly, Falconstar showed no grief for his attack on Herbfeather and only demanded we give him the cure. I, of course, refused."

Silverpaw was surprised. AppleClan was supposed to help those in need, and Bramblestar always had. But now, she was letting them die... Silverpaw felt like her leader was putting personal grudges above the lives of cats.

Evidently, many others thought so too. There was a lot of grumbling amongst the crowd, whispers of dismay being echoed.

"If Falconstar wants to think he deserves something, let him suffer for it." Bramblestar's frown deepened. "Secondly, I regret to

report that one of Honeydrop's kits, Icekit, has unfortunately passed away."

Silverpaw sighed. Somehow, she knew this was coming. Many cats groaned in despair at the news.

"She died peacefully, in her sleep. The cause of death is unknown, but we think it is similar to the disease that killed Springleaf and Cinderfall. The kit was young and fragile from the start, but nonetheless we will mourn her death."

Bramblestar stopped for a moment of silence to mourn the lost kit before continuing. "In other news, our apprentices Singepaw and Shinepaw are progressing well and will hopefully have their evaluations in a moon."

Singepaw. She had thought about him for the last couple days. Bramblestar continued speaking, but she ignored the speech. Singepaw had saved her, apparently, just in the nick of time.

She had not had the chance to thank him, but Silverpaw wondered why. Why he had risked so much. Why he chose *her*, of all the cats that were there, to help. After all, they hated each other with a passion.

Silverpaw stretched, immediately regretting the decision as a cut on her belly seared with pain. More importantly than Singepaw, she needed to talk to Bramblestar.

There was no way they could let EmberClan die. Whatever quarrels Bramblestar might have with the clan, she would have to put them aside.

To save cats' lives.

To save a clan.

It's good to see Silverpaw is healing, but poor Icekit :(. Hope you enjoyed, I sure have writing this!

Chapter twenty five out Friday!

Chapter Twenty-Five: Converse

Silverpaw sat next to her littermates as they watched Wildnose and Silentleaf spar against Skysong. The three littermates watched and learned as the warriors demonstrated how to fight two opponents at once.

"It's an important skill to learn," Skysong had said. "You never know when an enemy could have friends, or if you're outnumbered."

She was hard pressed, fighting both Wildnose and Silentleaf at the same time. Dashing in, Skysong batted at Wildnose's leg before immediately leaping out as Silentleaf attempted to sneak up behind her.

The trick is never to stay in the same place, Silverpaw thought. *Mobility is key.*

Silverpaw's mentor leaped onto Silentleaf's now exposed back before jumping off as Wildnose attempted to claw her, only succeeding in bruising his ally.

Berrypaw's eyes widened. "Wow, Skysong is good at this! She's using their uncoordination against them."

The three cats stopped their fight and padded over to the apprentices. Out of the exchange, Skysong had minimal scratches, while her opponents were much more battered.

"Wow, that was impressive!" Silverpaw commented.

"Thanks." She responded with a smile. "As you can see, you need to make your enemies work against each other. If it's not a fair fight, level the playing field."

The apprentices their nodded understanding. After some

practice, which Silverpaw fared well in, they all made their way back to camp. The sun was setting in the sky, birds chirped, and peaceful sounds of a frozen forest played in the background.

"Go ahead and get some rest, we are on the dawn patrol tomorrow so make sure you wake up early."

"Yes, Skysong." Silverpaw said to her mentor.

Padding to the fresh kill pile, she picked a skinny mouse off the top and, settling down near the nursery, winced as her wounds still stung from a few days ago.

As Silverpaw ate, she watched Honeydrop nursing her three remaining kits. Even though they were less than a week old, they were already trying to move. They were as healthy as could be, and it seemed they would live comfortably.

Silverpaw's smile faded as her thoughts trailed off to her dream. She was concerned for EmberClan, concerned for her friend, Petalpaw. She knew that without the cure, it was unlikely many, if any, would survive.

Thinking back to Duskpelt, Silverpaw realized that maybe this was what he had meant. Bramblestar refused to help EmberClan, and many cats were strongly against this and expressed the thought.

Those who had tried to convince Bramblestar this was the wrong choice were quickly dismissed, even Thornfur, who had been her deputy for over twenty moons. But as Duskpelt had warned her, she would listen to none but Silverpaw.

Finishing her meal, she got up and headed to her leader's den. Knocking on the door, she heard Bramblestar's voice call from inside.

"Enter," she said as Silverpaw walked in calmly, a saddening sight meeting her eyes.

The she-cat looked sickly-her pelt sagged, her eyes looked endlessly tired. The faint smile she gave Silverpaw as the apprentice entered was shaky and weak.

"Silverpaw, what a surprise to see you. What do you need?"

"We need to talk," she responded. "About EmberClan."

The smile on Bramblestar's face faded slightly at the mention of the opposing clan. "What about them? There is nothing more of them to talk about."

"You need to give them the cure," Silverpaw said bluntly. "Too many lives are at stake. Nothing should get in the way of that."

"Oh, Silverpaw," she began with a sigh. "You're too young to understand. We cannot let the ignorant and stubborn rule. If I were to give Falconstar what he wanted, he would only ask for more. Maybe next time it would be land, or prey-whatever it could be, we can't afford to show them any weakness."

Silverpaw tensed, her leader's words echoing through her, testing her patience and self-control. Raging would do no good. Being reasonable would.

"Do you trust me?" Silverpaw asked.

Bramblestar looked at her. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, do you trust me. After these past few moons, have I gained your confidence as a reasonable, loyal cat?"

"Yes," she whispered after a moment of thought.

"Then trust me on this," Silverpaw answered back. "Making EmberClan suffer for Falconstar's mistakes will only cause more suffering."

Bramblestar looked thoughtful for a minute. *She's realizing I'm right.* Silverpaw thought. *Violence will only cause more violence. Now is the time to stop this cycle.*

Eventually, she nodded with a grim but believing look on her face. "Ok, Silverpaw. I may not like it, but if that is what you think, StarClan help me for listening to an apprentice, I will do it. I hope I won't regret this." She finished, looking at Silverpaw meaningfully.

"Thank you, Bramblestar, you won't." She responded to the she-cat with a smile. "I'm sure the clan will be happy to learn of your decision."

They exited the leader's den together, and while Bramblestar leapt onto the high tree, Silverpaw sat, realizing what she had just done and what faith Bramblestar had put in such a lowly apprentice.

"All cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around the High Tree for a clan meeting." She yelled into the air, many cats settling beneath the tree. Once all were gathered, she started.

"I have decided," Bramblestar said, clearing her throat. "We will save EmberClan by giving them the antidote for the disease."

Cheers erupted at the news. The troubled thoughts of the EmberClan cats suffering fro Falconstar's mistakes were put to rest.

Bramblestar continued. "Tomorrow at dawn, Herbfeather, if she is willing, will travel to their territory with two cats accompanying her. They will deliver the spiritroot and instruct their medicine cat before returning."

Silverpaw smiled. She had convinced Bramblestar to do the right thing. *Springleaf would be proud.* Silverpaw thought. *And Duskpelt too.*

As Bramblestar ended the meeting and cats dispersed, she saw Singepaw walk through the tunnel out of camp. Realizing this was her chance, Silverpaw bounded after him.

She followed as Singepaw climbed to the top of the trees, resting occasionally. Managing to keep up quietly, Silverpaw emerged from the top of the canopy, stars twinkling down at her as the moon shone.

Staring at them, She sat next to Singepaw, making him jump, almost falling out of the tree. "What are *you* doing here?" He hissed.

Looking at her fellow apprentice, Silverpaw felt herself smile. "I came to ask you something."

He had a look of surprise on his face, settling back down on a branch.

"Ask me what?" The tom inquired.

"Why you saved me." She whispered. "I thought you hated me, but now... I don't know what to think."

The stars shone bright, calming her, slowing her thoughts to a steady stream instead of the raging river they were.

Singepaw looked surprised. "I... I've never hated you, Silverpaw." His surprise turned to embarrassment. "Infact, I've always been jealous of the relationship you've had with your siblings. Me and Shinepaw just don't have that..."

Silverpaw blushed. Here was her annoying clanmate, always pestering her, always aggravating her, admitting he was jealous. "I always thought you didn't want a relationship with anyone. You were always distant."

They gazed at the stars together. Night birds chirped around them.

"We should probably get back before anyone realizes we're gone." Singepaw said suddenly. Silverpaw nodded.

As they returned to camp, Silverpaw looked at her denmate. His orange ginger coat gleamed in the starlight. His sleek tail flicked through the undergrowth. Ears perked up as they silently padded their way back to camp.

Maybe, just maybe, they could be friends. And as Silverpaw settled into her nest that night, she realized she was happy, through the ups and downs.

But there was a looming feeling beneath it all.

A feeling of foreboding.

Wow, Silverpaw's really stepping it up for her clan. It sure would be a shame if something were to happen... Longer chapter, I

know, but I couldn't stop myself! Hope you're enjoying so far anyways!

Next chapter out Sunday!

Chapter Twenty-Six: Harbinger

Moons passed. Skysong and Silverpaw accompanied Herbfeather as they delivered the spiritroot. She saw the horror and destruction that had occurred in their camp. It was much worse than her dream days ago.

Rosewing, the EmberClan medicine cat, nearly cried at the sight of the small patrol. She thanked them endlessly, only stopping while Herbfeather instructed her on the use of the herbs.

Falconstar accepted the help with a few gruff words, though his face betrayed him, showing the relief he felt. Perhaps gratitude would be too much of an overstatement, but he was certainly relieved.

Silverpaw even saw Petalpaw and, though they couldn't talk much, the looks the two exchanged showed their friendship as well as their mutual relief.

For a while after that, it felt like the world was back to normal. Sure, the river had clogged with gunk, fish still reeked with disease. Sure, prey sometimes tasted weird, or a cat came down with an unnatural cough. But maybe their world had just changed. Maybe this was a new beginning.

But Duskpelt's words rang in her ears. *Tread lightly, for Darkmoon is gathering power. Be wary of his strength, or it might just overwhelm you.*

Shivers ran down her spine. Darkmoon's gathering power... For what? What could that mangy flea bag possibly want? But she knew the only way to find out was from her father. And he hadn't shown up in her dreams for a while.

Eventually, it came time for Singepaw and Shinepaw's warrior assessments. She felt nervous for them, and not only Shinepaw, but

Singepaw too.

They had begun to become good friends over the last moon, despite their differences. They hunted, spared, and laughed at night, above the tree canopy, gazing at the stars together.

Assessment day arrived, and though it was greeted by anxious anticipation, the two apprentices did well, Singepaw showing skill in battle, while Shinepaw turned out to be an exceptional hunter despite the cold leaf-bare weather.

The ceremony was held that night. "Singepaw, Shinepaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do."

"I do."

"Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your warrior names. Singepaw from this moment on you will be known as Singeclaw. StarClan honors your bravery and courage and welcomes you as a full warrior of AppleClan. Shinepaw, from this moment on you will be known as Shinecloud. StarClan honors your loyalty and kindness and welcomes you as a full warrior of AppleClan."

Cheers burst from the crowd, intermingled with the chant of "Singeclaw! Shinecloud! Singeclaw! Shinecloud!"

Silverpaw shouted perhaps the loudest of all, happy for her friends' long awaited success. That night, as she settled down in her nest, she missed the warm heat of Singeclaw next to her, as she drifted into sleep.

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In the days that followed, Silverpaw's training reached it's peak. Nearly five moons had passed since the day she was made an

apprentice. It was the most important section of her training - advanced battle moves, tree climbing, lectures from Skysong. Soon, she would face her assessment, too.

Weirdly, Silverpaw felt herself growing more distant with Pebblepaw and Berrypaw. They always felt busy, distracted, even though they, too, had their assessments coming up. Especially Pebblepaw...

As a result, she grew closer to Singeclaw, despite his new warrior duties. Many a sunset were spent in their favorite spot, above the trees, above the world.

Honeydrop's kits were growing up, old enough to wander out of the nursery occasionally. Silverpaw had become especially fond of one, Acornkit. He always seemed to put up with his sisters' constant bickering with a calm, loving composure.

Morningfire had mourned the loss of Icekit for many days, but eventually he found solace in his other kits, giving him hope that though one was lost, life could still go on in the clan with new apprentices.

Silverpaw felt pride in the fact she had convinced Bramblestar to save EmberClan. It gave her new confidence in StarClan and the fact that AppleClan was, at heart, A compassionate, peaceful clan.

And though times change, she knew all too well, it seemed things were looking up.

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Silverpaw once more found herself running through a pine forest, in the early tinged of night. *But running from what?* Skidding to a halt, she looked behind her, and though once more horror filled her senses, this was beyond anything else she had experienced thus far.

Fire crackled. Embers popped. A raging inferno followed

Silverpaw's every move. But it was different... She could feel the scorching heat radiating from the blaze. It felt like her pelt was melting, and soon she would be roasted.

Gazing into the fire, she could see cats running for their very lives. From what she could tell most of them were HollowClan cats. Grey, ginger, white, they all ran, stumbling over each other, pressing each other down, only to be swallowed up by the inferno at their heels.

Silverpaw wanted to help. It hurt to see these cats suffering, but as she stepped forward, a searing rapidly spread throughout her paw. As she looked down, backing up, she saw she had stepped into the flames, and her paw burned with the pain, causing a limp

This... Was no ordinary dream. It felt real. She could feel everything, from smelling the smoke to the fire burning in front of her. And though that was true, when a group of felines raced towards her, Silverpaw was shocked temporarily as they past straight through her, unable to see or feel the she-cat.

So instead, she observed from a distance. There were some cats helping support an elder there, or hold a kit here, but barely more than half a dozen - sorely inadequate.

Then, Silverpaw spotted something. A silver furred she-cat, standing beneath a high ledge with a kit in her jaws, glaring up at something. Following their gaze, Silverpaw gave a start. It was a pure black cat with amber eyes, standing on the ledge, watching the chaos unfold beneath him.

Rage boiled within her. This cat stood there and watched while so many suffered beneath them. It was a shameful display of their loyalty, assuming they were HollowClan.

Rage turned to horror as a tree cracked. It fell with sudden speed, giving no warning to any bystanders below. The silver she-cat was unfortunate enough to be running in it's path, trying to get the kit back to safety, but getting pinned and trapped underneath.

Silverpaw could see the black fur red tom cackle with laughter

at the sight. The she-cat suddenly stopped struggling under the log and instead looked through the flames for a moment, until staring Silverpaw straight in the eyes.

Giving a start, Silverpaw blinked before realizing the she-cat had looked away and, instead, tossed the kit into a clump of unburned bushes, nearly impossible to see through the flames. Shortly after, the kit emerged and scuttled back to safety, before even more trees gave way, trapping any remaining cats inside the deadly inferno.

Silverpaw suddenly felt a pain like burns but without the burning, before completely blacking out.

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"Though we cannot talk, for Darkmoon prevents it, I can still give warning: act with haste, for it is close at paw.

A flash of silver comes, through flames,
Flames of death and despair.
And though none other dare try,
They challenge the dark one of old for life"

Hey, hope your enjoying! Thank you so so much for 200 reads, felt like yesterday it was at 100...!

Next chapter out Wednesday!

Chapter Twenty-Seven: Flames of Fear

Silverpaw mentally frowned. *Another prophecy.* She woke with that thought swirling in head. Laying in her nest, she pondered thoughtfully. *At least its straightforward and simple,* She reasoned.

Getting up, Silverpaw winced. She walked with a slight limp and, looking down, saw her paw was burned where she had stepped in the flames. It had been real but... Not?

Ignoring the pain, she left the apprentice's den, meeting Skysong next to the fresh kill pile where she was eating a plump mouse.

"You're up early." She said, raising a metaphorical eyebrow.

"I had another dream" Silverpaw said quietly and blandly. "But at least this one is simple."

Skysong raised both eyebrows this time. "We'll talk about this later, during training." She said, peering around to make sure no cats were listening in on their conversation.

Silverpaw nodded before heading out for a morning walk to contemplate this new dilemma. But something told her this might be too important to wait. It felt urgent.

An eerie feeling bothered her as Silverpaw walked through the forest. A feeling of frustrating obviousness nagged at her. There was something missing, something obvious. Something she had missed.

The faint orange glow of sunrise hovered over HollowClan's forest. But somehow, it felt wrong. Sunrise was hours ago. Then something clicked in her mind. *A flash of silver comes, through flames, flames of death and despair...* A fire! It was so painfully obvious. And a fire is not something to ignore.

Rushing back through the undergrowth, Silverpaw erupted back into the camp. Cats gave her curious looks as she entered the leader's den without even knocking.

"Bramblestar!"

Windwhisker lifted his head. "Silverpaw, what brings you in here shouting like the camps on fire."

Silverpaw gave him a look. "It might be if we don't act quickly! Where is Bramblestar?"

Windwhisker's grin faded at Silverpaw's serious expression, but he knew it was not the time for questions. "On the dawn patrol, but they haven't left yet."

Darting back out of the den, Silverpaw spotted the gathered cats about to head out the entrance. "Bramblestar, wait!" She said, rushing up to them

The leader looked at the young apprentice. "What is it?" She said, alarmed at the look on Silverpaw's face.

"A fire!" She blurted out. Small gasps from the surrounding cats ensued. "Right now it's in HollowClan's territory, but soon it will grow and envelop the entire forest if we don't do anything."

Bramblestar nodded hastily and looked to Thornfur, who was at her side. "Take half a dozen cats to go and help HollowClan put out the fire or evacuate. I'll alert the other clans and start with preventive measures."

Thornfur nodded. "Windwhisker, Skysong, Silverpaw, Singeclaw, Silentleaf, and Pebblepaw, come with me." He bellowed. As soon as the called cats were gathered, he sped out the entrance, patrol following close behind.

In the distance, there were already the sounds of disturbed birds. The fire had come.

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"Ravenstar, there's a fire!"

Ravenstar looked up, eyes filled with concern. A fire meant devastation and death. They could be driven from their home, or the whole forest could be burned to the ground.

"It's spreading quickly, headed right for us." The cat, Treefall, said quickly, a tone of fear in his voice. "What do we do?"

"How big is it and what direction is it coming from?"

"It came from the pine grove, and it's almost to camp, but," His eyes widened in fear at the thought. "D-do you think this is a natural fire. Or *him*?"

Ravenstar gave him a disapproving look. "You shouldn't believe rumors. Now hurry and bring in the dawn patrol. We need to evacuate immediately!"

They rush out of the leader's den, and their ears fille with the sound of crackling fire and snapping branches. It was not yet in the camp, but cats were still scattering panically.

Ravenstar exchanged glances with Blackbreeze, his deputy. They both knew the danger they were in.

Jumping onto the High Stump, Ravenstar quickly called his cats to order. "We must act quickly and calmly to evacuate everyone. Help kits and elders, we will head to the stream near AppleClan."

Just as cats began moving, horrible cracking sounds filled the air as numerous trees crashed down. Some missed the camp, falling back into the surrounding forest, while others fell into the camp.

Ravenstar watched as a tree fell on Greenpaw, his daughter and the medicine cat apprentice. Leaping into action, he began trying to drag the young she-cat out from under the tree, but when he succeeded with surprising ease, a horrid sight met his eyes.

Greenpaw, her eyes glazed and foggy, body limp, and it seemed like she had broken many bones, as her legs stuck out at weird angles. It had killed the she-cat instantly.

And in the midst of the chaos, Ravenstar mourned for his dead daughter. The first victim of the fire.

First of many.

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Silverpaw followed the others as they sped through the undergrowth, quickly entering HollowClan territory. The fire was blazing with an intensity in the distance, flaring up occasionally when it reached a dead tree or pile of brush.

Up ahead, cries of pain and anguish reached the patrol's sharp ears. Quickening her pace, Silverpaw entered a clearing and her eyes took in a sight dreadfully familiar.

The wildfire raged, trees fell, screams of cats in pain echoed in Silverpaw's ears. Many HollowClan cats could be seen trying to rush out of the forest in an attempt to flee for their lives. Many an elder or kit were left unaided to fend for themselves.

"Let's get in there and help instead of sitting here and gaping!" Thornfur meowed roughly.

The patrol sprang into action, leaping forward to begin aiding the cats in escaping the inferno. Silverpaw and Skysong headed straight towards the fire in an attempt to help the more sorely needing cats.

Silverpaw heard soft, mewing cries coming from behind some bushes not far ahead. Charging forward, she scampered valiantly over burning branches, fallen limbs, and scarred roots.

Never once was Silverpaw scared. Not really, anyway. She knew

there was so much to be afraid of, but she did not let that fear creep in. The cost of it was too high.

Squeezing through the not yet burned bush, she emerged into what looked like a little clearing attached to the bigger one. The cries of help came from above her. A young kit around the age of Honeydrop's hung dangling from a branch in the side of a short cliff.

And above it, Silverpaw saw something that made her blood run cold.

Darkmoon.

Wow déjà vú. I hope they don't all burn in this fiery fire!

Last chapter of part four out Saturday!

Chapter Twenty-Eight: Heart of Fire

Silverpaw's heart skipped a beat. Terror seized her as she recognized the black furred tom from her dreams and the night with Herbfeather. But beneath the fear she felt now, there was a hint of confusion.

During that night, they had been saved by the fact that daybreak had come, so Darkmoon and his minions had retreated back into the forest. But now, it seemed he was no longer restricted to the night.

Silverpaw snapped back to the present as she heard the cackling laugh of Darkmoon, amusement on his face.

"Well well well, everycat's favorite prophet here to save the day again." He said menacingly. "I must admit, I'm surprised you knew about the fire. I suppose I need to tighten security about those dreams of yours."

Speechless for a second, Silverpaw quickly took in what the tom had said. "What do you mean, 'tighten security'? You don't control me!"

Darkmoon grinned. "I control more than you could imagine. My powers only grow every passing day... Now, why don't you run along and let me deal with this kit before somecat gets hurt."

The look on his face turned from amusement to annoyance. Silverpaw glared at the much larger, stronger tom, mustering what courage she had.

"I won't let you near him!" She yelled, shocking even herself. Darting forward, she leapt onto a nearby boulder, then another, and another, slowly clawing her way up the steep cliff.

"I enjoy to watch you struggle you know," the tom remarked. "It gives me a sense of accomplishment to see you fail."

Silverpaw reached the topmost rock, still a couple fox lengths away from the ledge. "What now, ki-"

Suddenly, without warning, she leapt. She leapt higher than a two-leg, clearing the ledge easily and slashing her claws across his sneering face.

Darkmoon's shock was evident. He stumbled back, blood spurting from the gash now across his muzzle. The pain and shock quickly wore off, this face replaced with a look if rage.

"You little fox-cub, you'll pay for that!" he yelped before dashing forwards with astounding speed and tumbling into Silverpaw.

They rolled towards the edge of the cliff, and the drop suddenly deepened as the realization she might not survive if she fell dawned. The irrational rage and anger started to fade from Silverpaw, fear and panic replacing it.

The roll ended with Darkmoon on top, his claws slashing at her with imprecise, rage fueled strokes. Some tore deep, but most only scratched. Silverpaw heard the soft cries of the kit once again and redoubled her efforts. Throwing him off with her hind legs, she rolled left, narrowly avoiding his attempt to pin her once more.

They tore at each other with teeth, claws, and pure hatred as they brawled, each trying their best not to be thrown off the cliff while going for a killing blow. Silverpaw fought for all she had lost, and all she stood to save.

Eventually, however, Darkmoon's strength and size got the better of her. With a sweep of his paw, she was knocked backwards, off the cliff. Snagging her paw on the ledge, she held on for dear life.

Darkmoon huffed as he looked down upon his defeated foe. "You

fought well for one so young. What a shame it had to end like this. Say hello to Duskpelt for me."

Silverpaw's eyes opened as he raised his paw to seal her demise. But instead, she used her secondly dangling paw's still extended claws to reach up and carve deep scars into his leg. As Darkmoon howled in pain, Silverpaw looked down, and, with only a second of thought, let go.

Time seemed to slow down. The fire still burned around her, Darkmoon howled in pain and frustration, but most importantly, the helpless cries of the kit could still be heard as his grip on the branch supporting his weight loosened.

Spinning, Silverpaw looked down and, with remarkable precision, landed on a small ledge next to the struggling kit. She gasped, stumbling slightly at the impact, before standing steadily up.

Ignoring Darkmoon's curses of frustration, she started towards the kit. One of his paws slipped, and he looked towards Silverpaw will a look of desperation and pleading.

Quickly, she grabbed his fallen paw and, pulling him onto her ledge, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck with her teeth.

Trying not to flood with panic, Silverpaw found a safe spot of unburned moss to land. Jumping for one final time, she landed, and breathed a sigh of desperate relief.

Looking back up to Darkmoon, she gave him one, last defiant glare before turning a dashing back through the burning forest.

Sweat poured off her in droves as the intensity of the flames renewed. Up ahead, she could see many HollowClan cats running for the AppleClan border, some of her fellow Clanmates assisting those who needed it most. The kit in her jaws mewed and and looked up not only gratefully, but admiringly.

But something felt off. Once more, there was a looming feeling it was not this easy. Then her mind darted back to her dream. The

fire, the kit. She had witnessed what had happened. But that meant...

Suddenly, a tree cracked to her left. Looking up in terror, she barely had a chance to gasp slightly before it fell on top of her. It hurt as not only the weight of the massive pine crushed her but the fire searing it burned. She heard Darkmoon's cackling laugh ring in her ears.

As she struggled hopelessly, Silverpaw thought back to that dream. She had saved the kit by tossing it to safety, into a clump of unburned bushes.

For confirmation, she looked between the flames and trees to exactly where she knew she would be watching. Sure enough, Silverpaw saw herself, in a translucent and neat form, staring at her. Her heartbeat quickened dramatically.

Looking away suddenly, she thought for a second, whispering, "Tell them I'm sorry for everycat I couldn't save." Gathering her remaining strength she tossed the kit out of her jaws and over the blazing fire.

His small form disappeared into the flames, and for a second she felt a stab into her heart at the thought she had missed. But then, faintly, she saw the kit emerge beyond the inferno, and, giving Silverpaw a sad, but eternally grateful smile, he dashed off towards the clearing.

Despite the pain slowly enveloping her, Silverpaw felt at peace. She had completed her mission here in the forest. She had saved as many cats as should could. And now she was going to see her father and mother again, going to StarClan.

Yet Silverpaw felt regret too. Regret she wouldn't be there for Singeclaw. Regret she couldn't give Skysong the pride of having her apprentice be made a warrior. Regret she couldn't claw off Darkmoon's face personally.

With all her thoughts, fears, regrets, and accomplishments swirling around in her head, Silverpaw finally felt the

overwhelming pain of the fire as tree crashed, burning, around her, and succumbed to the darkness.

OOOOOOOHHH NUUUUUUUUUUUUUU! Anyways don't worry this isn't the last chapter. By the end of it the book will probably have around 3 hours of read time. Really hope you've enjoyed the book nonetheless as it's taken me a lot of effort to write (it's 3:19 in the morning) but y'all make it worth it!

Next chapter out Sunday!

Part 5 Cover Art

[image]

Chapter Twenty-Nine: Vigil

Singeclaw rushed through the burning forest. The fire had become almost unmanageable. Burning branches, tree trunks, even the ground itself was on fire.

But Singeclaw kept a steady pace. Passing quickly by a kit hastily rushing the other direction, he jumped over a log and weaved through flames. However, as he neared his objective, the fire became even more intense, the heat almost unbearable.

And yet Singeclaw gritted his teeth and charged forward. The flames burned his paws, but he could see his destination. The she-cat lay trapped under a now snapped trunk. Pulling her out easily, he slung her gently across his back before standing back up.

More trees came crashing down, encircling them in an inferno of death. They had to get out of here. Staying any longer would mean certain death.

Leaping onto the log he had jump freed the feline from, Singeclaw walked along it, over the circle of flames, before dashing back towards the clearing.

Everycat else had either been evacuated or perished in the flames. Both AppleClan and HollowClan were attempting to create a fire line that would contain the fire by clawing up the grass and shrubs.

As they approached, Herbfeather immediately rushed over, herbs in her mouth.

Looking Silverpaw over, her face darkened. "She is badly burned, has freshly cut wounds, and several broken bones. Even with proper treatment in the medicine den there is little hope."

The little kit Singeclaw had seen earlier, who had been listening,

approached them, tears in his eyes. "She saved me. She risked her life, not only in the fire, but fighting that tom cat. She wanted to me to give you a message."

They looked at the young kit. "What message?" They said in unison, voices choked and strained.

"I'm sorry for everycat I couldn't save." He recited.

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Silverpaw gasped. Her breathing slowly regulated, changing from panting to gentle breaths. The smoke clogging her lungs slowly disappeared. Next, she tried opening her eyes. For a moment, the weight of her eyelids kept them shut, but a few seconds later, they lifted with regular ease.

Her surroundings were not a burning forest, or the apprentice's den, but a place she had only seen in dreams. The grassy green plains shined in the sunshine. One more, she was underneath a beech tree, laying in the shade its branches.

A few seconds later, her sensitive ears popped. A slight, pleasant breeze ruffled the tree's leaves. It was suitably calming for her tense nerves.

The smell of green grass and daffodils filled the air, mixed with the scent of smoke quickly evaporating. Silverpaw breathed gently, calming herself with the thought it was just another dream - probably.

As if answering her thought, a cat walked up beside her, sitting down upon the springy grass. Looking at him, she could see Duskpelt, a grave look on his face.

"Father!" She exclaimed, "I haven't seen you in forever."

He did not turn to look at her, but continued staring straight

ahead, his mouth moving fractionally. "And for good reason. Darkmoon blocked my communication with you as he did with the medicine cats."

Silverpaw's eyes widened as her head swam. "How? How is that even possible?"

"I don't know," came the answer, "but I know at least now that problem will never occur again."

"What do you mean?" She asked, confusion evident in her voice.

He looked at her, a stern yet gentle look in his eyes. "You died."

...what. Silverpaw thought. *Impossible, I'm here talking to him, aren't I?* But then she thought about it for a second. They were in StarClan, that much was clear. The place where cats went after they died. But also where medicine cats get their warnings.

"What do you mean?" She asked. "I can't really have died." But the look in his eyes told her otherwise.

"You were trapped under a burning log, surrounded by the greatest forest fire the clans have ever known. Additionally, Darkmoon wounded you pretty badly in your scuffle. It's safe to say you're dead."

Silverpaw started to shake. This couldn't really be happening. Even though her last moments were those of peace, there was still so much to be done, so many wrongs to right.

"Here, come with me." Duskpelt offered, turning towards the beech tree. Stepping towards it, he rammed headfirst into the tree. Except, he didn't. Instead, he passed into it like a ghost.

Getting up and following, she winced as her body came in contact, but was pleasantly surprised with a feeling of ease washing over her. Looking ahead, she followed Duskpelt through a new environment.

It was a star lit plain, surrounded on all sides by said stars of many colors, patterns, and sizes. Silverpaw appeared to be walking

on thin air, although she had no doubt that it probably wasn't just air.

Duskpelt led her through the endless sky to a star in the near distance. It was a deep blue, with an almost watery appearance. It reminded her of the sweeping river of the gorge that fateful day. Watching as her father stepped into the star, she soon followed.

They arrived, not to another grassy plain, but a rainy night, and Moonhigh had just approached. They were in the AppleClan camp, she could tell that much. Cats walked past, heads down.

Despite the fact a storm poured torrents of rain upon them, a small gathering of six cats stood by a clump of what looked to be fur. Looking questioningly at Duskpelt, she padded forward.

As usual, Silverpaw was invisible to the crowd of cats. The were sitting in a circle, eyes down, silent. She recognized them: Bramblestar, Herbfeather, Skysong, Berrypaw, Pebblepaw, and Singeclaw. Were those tears in their eyes, or just the rain pouring off them?

Her question was answered as she looked to the pile of fur. Lifeless eyes gazed out of her cold body. Legs lay gently at her side, at slightly awkward positions but still looked as if she was sleeping.

Silverpaw's head spun. Breath came in short gasps. She really *was* dead. This was her vigil, and her broken body lay scarred at her feet.

Racked with uncontrollable sobs, she could feel Duskpelt's warm fur slide up next to her.

"It's going to be alright," he muttered. "Look at me."

Raising her head to look at her father, she saw him only through blurry tears which she quickly wiped away.

"Your time is not yet up. StarClan needs you still among the living. And this time, I will make sure you have the strength you need to face what is coming."

Silverpaw sniffled. "W-what do you mean? I'm dead. That's all that is to it."

Duskpelt looked deep into her eyes. "StarClan will use their last bit of power to give you breath once again." He shook his head as she tried to speak. "Don't argue. I don't know how they do it, but they can and will.

"I wish you could stay here, with me and your mother, but StarClan has another fate for you. You are their last hope, if you fail all is lost."

Silverpaw gulped as she tried processing the information she had just been told. StarClan would... Revive her, in a sense. There was still more work to be done. But she was willing to do it.

"I'm ready," she told Duskpelt.

He smiled. "Be careful, Silverpaw. Stay alert, and know I'll always be watching." And with that, he shoved her backwards, onto the ground, and into her lifeless body.

😶😶😶 The main character, died??? Whoever wrote this story apparently wanted to end it early. Oh wait- that's me. Hope your enjoying, we should be in our last ten chapters, but I'd like to write a prequel aswell!

Chapter Thirty out Friday!

Chapter Thirty: Heartache

Singeclaw trotted with the patrol half heartedly. They were carrying Silverpaw's limp body back to the medicine den, passing a number of HollowClan cats on their way back to camp.

Most of them looked relieved, the fire being doused by the StarClan-sent rain clouds that had saved the day. But some showed early grief for the cats lost to the flames, fear their home had been destroyed, and resentment that they had had to be saved by AppleClan.

Bramblestar had been able to get a message to the other clans in time. Even now, MistClan cats hurried back and forth in an attempt to be remembered as offering crucial aid in a time of despair. It disgusted him.

EmberClan had been building a fire breach to protect their camp. Though they lost a few cats to the surprise of the fire, most emerged unscathed from the disaster.

Bitterly, Singeclaw returned to the present. He was carrying AppleClan's only loss, Silverpaw, on his back. He had insisted her to be his burden alone. It was a pain Singeclaw felt he deserved.

He had not been with her in the fire. He had not been there when she fought Darkmoon. If he had been there for her, things would have turned out differently. But instead, he held back away from the blaze like the coward he was.

Renewed with vigor, he pressed on, arriving at the entrance to the camp with Skysong and Herbfeather close behind, along with the small HollowClan kit, who had insisted on accompanying them.

Emerging from the passageway, Singeclaw padded straight to the medicine den. Cats scampered out of the way, eyes filled with grief and remorse at the sight of Silverpaw's burned and bloodied body.

Reaching the nests inside, he settled her down in the nicest one, backing away to let Herbfeather tend to her. The medicine cat had a look of despair on her face, while Skysong was close to tears.

Herbfeather's look deepened. "You might want to go get Bramblestar." She said, applying a healing salve for burns and cobwebs on her cuts.

Skysong quickly left, leaving Singeclaw alone with the kit as Herbfeather worked in the back, rummaging for the correct herbs.

"What happened, back in the forest?" He asked quietly. "How did she saved you?"

The little HollowClan cat looked up at him. "It was amazing," he said, a sparkle in his eye. "She fought a dark furred tom cat with the ferocity of a warrior. I didn't see the whole thing, but eventually she slashed his legs before dropping off the ledge they were on to save me.

"I was hanging onto a branch sticking out the side of the ledge. The tom had pushed me off, and he definitely enjoyed watching me struggle. But then she - Silverpaw, you said?"

Singeclaw nodded. "Wow, I thought she was a warrior for sure, probably the deputy! Anyways, Silverpaw grabbed me and pulled me up before dropping down to the ground. When the tree fell on us, she whispered me her message, and threw me safely over the flames. I made my way to where everyone else was running."

He finished his story rather bluntly, but the effect on Singeclaw was evident. Tears welled in his eyes. Guilt that he was not there for her coursed through him. They could have had so many happy days together, but now they had been cut short.

Skysong returned, this time with Bramblestar, Pebblepaw, and Berrypaw in tow. Wordlessly, they surrounded the nest, settling down to watch silently as Herbfeather went about her work.

"What's her condition?" Bramblestar's asked almost immediately.

Herbfeather gave her a look of pure sadness and despair.

"Critical. I can try my hardest, but her life is in StarClan's paws now."

Bramblestar's gaze switched. "You are the kit she will have died saving?" She turned suddenly to face the HollowClan cat. "What's your name?" She asked after he nodded.

"Lonekit." He responded. She frowned.

"Why did they name you that?"

"They tell me I was found as a young kit, too young to remember, probably the son of some loners who couldn't feed me." It looked like the thoughts physically hurt him, like a crushing weight. "They took me in."

Bramblestar nodded sadly but said nothing. The rest of the day passed in silence, Bramblestar coming in and out of the den, but Singeclaw did not move from Silverpaw's side.

It was only him, Skysong, Berrypaw, and Lonekit there when she finally died. They audibly heard as she heaved her last breath, lungs rose in a final intake, before pushing it outward, never to do so again.

The vigil was held the same night, with all of them there except Lonekit, as this was an AppleClan matter. Many others stopped occasionally to share tongues one last time with the young apprentice.

Singeclaw's regret and pain reached a boiling point. He blamed himself for her death, desperately wishing there was some way to revert time, to change these events, to tell her the one thing he had always wanted to tell her all his life.

That he loved her.

Suddenly, a groan of pain interrupted his patrol of thought. Looking up to find the source, he instead found Silverpaw limping to her paws, cuts somewhat healed, bones mended.

The shock from the group was collective as silent. Half of them

had to rub their eyes to ensure they were not seeing things.

Silverpaw grinned. "Are you just going to stand there, or say something?"

Bedlam broke out in the clearing, but Singeclaw ignored it. Flinging himself at the she-cat, he hugged her tightly. "I thought I lost you." He whispered. Before she could respond, the rest of her family and friends crowded around them.

Tears poured, no words were spoken, just gleeful purrs and warm embraces. Eventually, they broke apart. Over half the clan was gathered around Silverpaw, waiting for a explanation or even just a reason.

Taking a deep breath, she began. She told them of all her dreams, the prophecies, how her father had guided her, her encounter with Darkmoon, how she had ended up saving the clan time and time again, and how she had saved the life of a young HollowClan kit. She told of how StarClan had given her a second life to finish her work in the land of living.

That night, Singeclaw slept next to Silverpaw in the apprentice's den. Never again would he leave her side. Never again would he let her face danger alone.

And one day, when they were both warriors, and this was all over, he would ask her to be his mate.

Aw <3 Singeclaw loves her. Kinda obvious but like he was shy ok? Anyways, thank you all for reading so far, I know I say this a lot, but I really do hope you are enjoying! It's the reason I wrote this book in the first place.

Next chapter Sunday!

Chapter Thirty-One: Emergence

The next day was a bit chaotic, not only for Silverpaw, but for the whole clan. As she walked past, cats turned to look at her, surprised, since last they saw was Singeclaw carrying her body back to camp.

Her wounds, which had been extreme, had seemingly been magically healed when StarClan gave her a second chance. All Silverpaw felt was a really bad ache in her bones and some sores where old wounds were.

Bramblestar had decided not to tell any of the other clans about Silverpaw's experience. Besides Lonekit, no cat outside of AppleClan knew.

The fire affected every Clan, but HollowClan's pine forest, obviously, took the most damage. It would soon grow back, stronger than ever, but the place would smell like burning wood for many sunrises.

EmberClan's long grass and dry, stretchy plains were perfect fuel for a quick, hot flame. Logs rotten with disease created big, deadly fireballs. A few cats got serious burns, but they got it under control before it got out of paw.

Even MistClan was not safe. The river protecting them, separating them from EmberClan territory, was thick with debris and flammable wood. It seemed to leap over the barrier, taking MistClan by surprise, roasting a cat in it's flames before petering out near the bank.

As for AppleClan itself, they were able to stop the fire from spreading into their forest with help from HollowClan, containing the damage. Apart from minor burns, and Silverpaw's death, they and their territory were unscathed.

The day passed rather tensely. She had taken the day off, with Bramblestar's approval, to rest not only physically, but also to mentally prepare for the days to come.

Lonekit had to return to his clan, and though their weak bond was a bit awkward, their goodbyes were genuine.

"Thank you so much, Silverpaw! You gave your own life to save me." He purred, nuzzling her. "I would have died if not for you."

Silverpaw was a little embarrassed at his affection. "I couldn't let you die," She responded. "I hope HollowClan will be glad to see you."

Lonekit frowned. "I hope so too." He gave her one last look of gratitude and admiration before bounding off towards HollowClan territory.

That evening, Silverpaw talked with Skysong. Their conversation drifted to her training. It had been nearing completion, and she wondered what else other was to learn.

"What other skills are left for me to learn?" She asked her mentor. "I know hunting, fighting, climbing, even some swimming. What more is there?"

Skysong looked away. "Oh, don't worry about it. You'll see what comes next."

Silverpaw's face turned to confusion. "What do you mean?"

She said nothing, just grinned. That moment, there was a court of movement as Bramblestar leapt onto the High Tree.

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around the High Tree for a clan meeting." The leader yelped into the air.

Looking at Skysong questioningly, Silverpaw trotted over to sit down beside Singeclaw. He gave her a lick as she sat down, their pelts brushing together. She blushed but did not attempt to move away.

Bramblestar waited for the gathering to gather and settle down. Eventually, she began. "AppleClan. We gather here for a couple reasons. First of all, good job fighting the fire. We saved many HollowClan lives as well as our forest. You all did well."

Silverpaw grinned uneasily. Singeclaw nudged her with a smile. Even though she was inevitably proud of her actions, she had mixed feelings. She was glad she saved Lonekit, but at the same time, she had died, and what kind of warrior dies in such a way?

"I've talked to HollowClan." Bramblestar continued. "They have been using an old twoleg nest as a camp while the fire dies and life comes back to their forest. They are thankful, they just avoid showing it."

A few disgruntled mutterings could be heard in the crowd, but they quickly died the cats accepted the news.

But Bramblestar was not finished. "Secondly, I'd like to commend and reward a cat who gave her life to save a kit's. You all-" Silverpaw stopped listening for a minute. Bramblestar was retelling the story. She felt her fur burn in embarrassment.

"-and so she told us everything. Her dreams, her father, everything. Such a loyal, honorable, and clearly skilled cat deserves to be more than an apprentice. To be a warrior."

Silverpaw perked her head up. *I'm going be a warrior? But I'm not even six moons old! Barely five!* But nonetheless, Bramblestar continued.

"Silverpaw, please come forward." Slowly walking through the crowd, Silverpaw felt every eye in the clearing on her.

Looking back, she could see Berrypaw and Pebblepaw looking at her with pride and respect, but also a bit of jealousy. Singeclaw was where she left him, beaming with happiness, and gave her an encouraging nod. Silverpaw turned her head forwards and continued.

Reaching the High Tree, she stood there, waiting. "Silverpaw, for

your skill, compassion, and most of all, courage, you are being made a warrior early, as you have proven you are beyond ready."

Silverpaw did not know what to say. In any case, Bramblestar continued before she had the chance to. "I, Bramblestar, leader of AppleClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to call upon this apprentice. She has trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend her to you as warrior in her turn.

"Silverpaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

Silverpaw swallowed. This was the moment she had been waiting for for the past five moons. Trying to keep from shaking, she responded.

"I do."

"Then by the powers StarClan, I give you your warrior name. Silverpaw, from this moment on you will be known as Silverpelt, out of remembrance of your father. StarClan honors your strength and compassion, and we welcome you as a full warrior of AppleClan."

Cheers rang out across the clearing. Silverpelt's heart swelled in pride as she heard her new name being yelled around her.

"Silverpelt! Silverpelt! Silverpelt!"

Bramblestar stepped forward and rested her muzzle on her head. "Well done, Silverpelt," she whispered. Embarrassed, she licked her leader's shoulders.

The crowd broke to congratulate Silverpelt, while others went back to doing their duties. She felt a mixture of emotions as numerous cats patted her on the back, or gave her a quick nod. She felt pride that she was finally a warrior, especially how she was made a warrior early.

But at the same time, Silverpelt felt under prepared and undeserving. Anycat would have done the same thing in her place, right? *And probably a better job too. I died trying.* Nonetheless, she

tried to accept her new place as warrior.

"Congratulations!" Berrypaw was beside her. "I almost couldn't believe it, but after hearing everything, it only makes sense! Why didn't you tell me?"

A small sense of guilt burned inside Silverpelt. "I couldn't. I mean, you would have thought I was crazy."

"Crazy that you dreamed of our dad?" She realized for the first time that Duskpelt wasn't just her father, but Berrypaw's and Pebblepaw's as well.

"I'm sorry, Berrypaw. I guess I didn't think about it that way," Silverpelt apologized.

"It's alright, just make sure you tell me next time!" Berrypaw said, grinning a pleasant smile before padding off to make room for other cats.

Skysong was next. "Did you know about the ceremony?" Silverpelt immediately asked.

"Ofcource," She relied, "after all, I'm the one who suggested it to Bramblestar."

She gaped. "Why? How do you know if I'm ready if I haven't even taken the assessments yet."

Skysong smiled at her now former apprentice. "Your actions in that forest yesterday was all I needed to see you're ready." With that, the mentor walked away silently, but Silverpelt could tell she was beaming with pride.

After the rest of her clan had moved on, Silverpelt took a deep breath before trotting over towards the warrior's den. A tap on her shoulder made her spin around.

It was Singeclaw. "Want me to show you your nest?" She nodded thankfully.

As they entered the den, Silverpelt remarked on it's size. It

seemed large, but she knew EmberClan's was roughly double the size, since AppleClan had never needed a big warrior den.

"There is not much room, but you can pick between that one by the entrance." Singeclaw motioned towards a scanty, small nest next to the entrance. "Or the one next to me."

Silverpelt laughed a little at her options. "I'll take the one next to you, thanks." She said.

Singeclaw smiled, but they were interrupted by Thornfur. "Don't forget about your vigil tonight Silverpelt. Good luck, don't fall asleep and no talking." He left.

Silverpelt grimaced. "Well, I've got to go. I'll see you tomorrow then, Singeclaw." The tom grinned back.

"Good luck, I almost fell asleep on mine." She turned to the exit. "And, Silverpelt?"

She looked back at him. "Congratulations on becoming a warrior. You deserve it."

"Thanks, Singeclaw." Heading towards the camp entrance, Silverpelt realized her life had taken yet another turn.

She was a warrior now, proud and strong. She would go on patrols regularly, hunt, and fight in any battles. She would serve her clan to the best of her ability.

She would protect them from Darkmoon.

And as Silverpelt sat once again under the stars, she smiled at the thought of her clan. Berrypaw, Skysong, Herbfeather, and Singeclaw. Especially Singeclaw.

Stars twinkled, the sky seemed to brighten, and the camp was quiet. All was well once again.

For now.

This is such a long chapter! I apologize sincerely. At the time of

first draft, it's 1,678 words! Sorry, I couldn't find a good spot to stop. Hope you've enjoyed anyways!

Additionally, I'm going to be decreasing uploads to probably twice a week because I'm working on a second book aswell and wo uld like to sleep sometime this month.

Next chapter Friday!

Chapter Thirty-Two: The Dead

The cats were nervous, the atmosphere tense. Death hung in the air despite their pleasant surroundings. The birds' song sounded dull and dreary, and the sun seemed to shine a dark, cold light.

The cats, in their usual pearl white forms, stood out like a sore paw amongst their surroundings. They looked without a care in the world, but their faces betrayed them. Worried looks shone, claws were unsheathed, and the group looked poised for flight.

"Applestar, why have you brought us here?" A voice from the crowd said. "We have no reason to fear them. They can't reach us in StarClan, we're safe."

Applestar leapt up onto a nearby rock. "My fellow StarClan cats," he began, "We are gathered here today to stop the Dark One's advance into places he should not be, to challenge his power. He grows unchecked, and is at this moment trying to break into StarClan. We are here to stop his if he should succeed."

Gasps could be heard. How could cats from the Dark Forest enter StarClan? Of course, they all knew Darkmoon and a few other of his minions had already entered the living world, but to enter StarClan itself? It was a horrifying thought.

Another cat stepped forward. "That's impossible! StarClan is for the dead who have earned it, not those who lived deserving death."

Many mumbles of agreement echoed through the grassy fields. Everycat doubted Applestar's words, but none enough to speak up.

"I'm not just guessing, you know," Applestar continued. "We have a cat who has been spying on Darkmoon. They say he is getting stronger, gathering the entire Dark Forest to his side with promises of revenge."

His words had a big impact on the crowd of cats below him. They stopped their grumbling and instead prepared for battle, trying to regain their old skill. Very little do StarClan cats fight.

Suddenly, a noise like a thunder crack filled the air. It startled the whole group, making them jump. Turning to the clearing, Applestar struggled to see anything before noticing a small rift hanging in the air.

It was pitch black, a gaping hole in an otherwise perfect patch of sky. It grew rapidly, however, and the StarClan warriors formed up into a battle formation.

Soon enough it was big enough for two cats to stand in, beside one another, and for a moment nothing happened. Until out of the darkness stepped forth a cat. Then another one. Then a third. They were ragged, dirty, and had looks of disgust and hatred in their gaze.

Silently more stepped out of the rift. Applestar could hear faintly as one asked, "I thought they didn't know we were coming, Darkmoon. How did they know?"

A dark furred tom answered. "It matters not, Halfbone. We came here for a fight, and it seems we'll get one." There was a malicious grin on his face.

They waited and watched in horror as more, and more, and *more* cats kept pouring out of the rift. It was starting to look like an impossible battle, the odds stacked against them.

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As the last of his army entered StarClan, Darkmoon started relaying his orders. "Take as many prisoner as you can. Kill anyone whom has wronged you in the living world, but leave Applestar alive. I want to kill him myself."

The battle was well in his favor, Darkmoon knew. From what he could tell, he had forty well trained well organized warriors against his opponent's probably twenty-five weak, untrained ones.

He eyed his army, ensuring they were all ready for the battle about to come. "Everycat ready? Forward!" He yelled into the air. His warriors charged forward, preparing to cut through their enemies like mice.

The two sides met with a clash. Snarls and hisses filled the air as fighting commenced. Blood soon poured from cats on both sides. Darkmoon dashed into the frey, slashing the throat of a cat as he passed, shock spreading through its face before falling to the ground, dead.

He barreled into another cat, and they began to wrestle. Biting, clawing, Darkmoon watched as his eyes went from anger to worry to fear as he realized who he was fighting and that he was hopelessly outmatched. Darkmoon grinned.

Reaching down to tear out his throat, he was suddenly flung off his prey as Applestar charged headfirst into his side. Landing feet down, they stood gazing at each other, only a few fox lengths apart.

"So, still being a nuisance, are we?" Darkmoon sneered. "You should have let me kill that tom. He was weak."

Applestar wrinkled his nose in disgust. "Weaker than you, I suppose? But how is that a fair comparison considering after all you have done."

The two cats leapt forward once again. Clawing and hissing, Darkmoon bit him in the ear, teeth ripping tendon, nearly tearing it off. Applestar yelped in pain, but did not stop clawing his opponent's side.

The battle raged around them, blood smearing the grass, cries of help and dead bodies littered the ground. It was a perfect scene ruined by a battle of the afterlife. A battle that would soon be over. StarClan cats had their lives and the living world to fight for, but Darkmoon's warriors had hatred.

StarClan began to retreat. One after the other they began to flee the scene of battle, leaving behind those who did not follow.

Darkmoon pounced on Applestar, pinning him to the ground and began slashing at his chest. Fur and fluff flew through the air, blood beginning to pour from the wound.

There was a shout that, for some reason, made Darkmoon look up. His eyes shone with hatred as he recognized Duskpelt, bleeding from multiple wounds and missing an ear, coming straight at them.

Applestar gave a moan and tried to push Darkmoon off unsuccessfully. "No, don't do it, Duskpelt! Run, save yourself, the battle is lost."

Screeching to a halt, Duskpelt looked conflicted. His fellow StarClan warriors around him began to flee in earnest, but there was still a moment of hesitancy.

"I said *go*!" Applestar shouted once again. Darkmoon gave a smile, and, though unable to attack his hateful enemy without letting Applestar go, he still did what damage he could.

"Listen to your leader," Darkmoon mocked. "Run to save you're own pelt."

With a final glare at the dark furred cat, Duskpelt turned around and ran. None too soon, either, as there were no cats left fighting, and those who were soon retreated as well.

Turning back to his pinned enemy, Darkmoon gave one, final, evil remark. "You shouldn't have trained me so well. Now look at you."

Applestar summoned what strength he had. "You will lose this war, I have set another on the path to your destruction."

Darkmoon grinned. "Oh, I wouldn't worry about Silverpaw. You see, trees can be quite deadly."

With one, final tug, he tore out Applestar's chest, leaving him dying, bleeding out slowly.

"Goodbye, Applestar. You were a horrible mentor."

His eyes clouded, and he moved no more.

Darkmoon gave a grunt of satisfaction before turning to his army. They were celebrating the victory, marveling with envious remarks at their surroundings. Darkmoon addressed them all.

"We have won a victory here today! We have to worry about StarClan no more, the survivors are without a leader, and they will no longer pose a threat. Let us return to the Dark Forest, lick our wounds, and prepare for the next phase of my plan!"

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Duskpelt peered through the bushes, ensuring they had gone. The rift was no longer hanging in the clearing, and on the ground lay the scattered bodies of cats, drenched in blood. He approached softly.

Disgusted at the sight, Duskpelt hurried past until he found one certain body. Applestar lay on the ground, chest bloody, ear torn, innumerable scratches and cuts across his entire body. He looked broken and shattered.

But suddenly, the body moved. Applestar gave a slight cough. "Duskpelt..." He whispered.

Duskpelt's eyes widened, and he leaned in to hear his leader better. "What is it?"

Applestar did not even open his eyes. "You need... To lead them. Bring them... Together. The Clans will need StarClan's support to defeat Darkmoon. Strike when the time is right. They... Need... You..."

With a final gasp, Applestar breathed his last for the second time Duskpelt could remember. This time, there would be no going back. No seeing him in StarClan. He was dead.

"I will make you proud."

Duskpelt turned away from the death and blood of the battleground, and headed into the forest to search for others.

Others to lead.

Oh no, I made it long again D:. My bad, I'll see if I can shorten it, but it's 6:02 AM (don't worry I slept) so we will see if I'm up to it. Hope you all enjoyed the lore, fight scene and chapter!

Next chapter out Wednesday!

Chapter Thirty-Three: Reticent

Silverpelt padded through the trees, birds singing overhead. The sun shone down on the snowy landscape, slowly melting the icy crystals, causing it to slosh around her paws.

Herbs clamped in her jaws, Silverpelt continued trudging through the snow. She was delivering much-needed herbs to HollowClan. They had taken temporary refuge in the abandoned twoleg den on the edge of AppleClan territory. They travelled to their own territory to hunt what they could, however.

Unfortunately, they seemed to have caught greencough. Usually, it could kill half a dozen cats and severely hurt a clan, but in HollowClan's weakened state, it could prove even more deadly.

All of Sagenose's herbs had burned in the fire, so Herbfeather has been sending them some. And thus, Silverpelt trotted through the leaf-bare landscape, hopeful for the future. After all, the Clans were slowly recovering, and were returning to normal life.

Arriving at the twoleg den, Silverpelt walked inside. A HollowClan cat stood watch outside, but let her pass with a curt nod.

Looking around, she gazed at the curious makeshift camp. Many cats were scampering up and down a long hallway, entering smaller dens connected on the sides. Peering into a room, she saw random pieces of stone, moss, and other rubble littering the floor.

"How long do we have to stay here?" Silverpelt heard an apprentice whine. "It's dirty and smells."

"Until we can return back to our forest, Shadepaw." An annoyed mentor responded tiredly. Chuckling to herself, she kept walking, receiving curious glances from passing cats.

Silverpelt felt a little lost in the structure, the unfamiliar scent and surroundings putting her on edge. Thankfully, somecat was here to change that.

"Silverpaw! What are you doing here?" she heard a voice behind her say. Spinning around, she grinned at the sight of Lonekit, carrying a clump of dried moss.

"Lonekit!" Silverpelt exclaimed, dropping her plants for a moment. "How nice to see you so soon. I'm here to deliver some herbs for Sagenose. Oh, and it's Silverpelt now."

He grinned. "Okay, *Silverpelt*." Trying out the new name on his tongue, he decided he liked it. "Come this way, I've got to drop off this moss too."

Following the young kit, they navigated the corridors before arriving at the medicine den. As they entered, Sagenose glanced I up from his work.

"Ah, the catmint and feverfew. Thank StarClan, maybe my patients will finally have chance a get better." He took the herbs from Silverpelt and returned to sorting the little herbs he had while he continued talking.

"Oh, and Lonekit, put that moss with the rest. " He said roughly. "Then get out of here. I don't need meaningless distractions."

Lonekit hung his head before following Sagenose's orders. Walking back out of the room, he nodded happily to Silverpelt before wandering away.

Silverpelt was about to follow, but the medicine cat had other plans. "Wait here a second, will you? I'd like to talk."

She stood awkwardly for a moment before Sagenose turned to face her.

"So you are the cat I've heard so much about?" He muttered, half to himself. "Curious, curious..."

Silverpelt felt her pelt burn as the tom continued to examine her. Confusion and intrigue got the better of her. "Sorry, what is so curious?"

Sagenose snorted softly. "Well, perhaps the fact StarClan has chosen *you* for such an important role. But more interestingly, I've known nothing about it."

His response puzzled Silverpelt. Why would he know anything about her relationship with StarClan? And if he should, why didn't he?

"I don't understand," She said honestly.

Sagenose grunted. "Of course not. We medicine cats have made sure that doesn't happen for the foreseeable future. But of course, it is not my place to tell you that. So how about we pretend you didn't hear that. Now, how is life in AppleClan?"

The flurry of words hit Silverpelt, and she took on a confused look. Medicine cats were... Hiding something? But Sagenose gave her an annoyed look, so she hurried to answer.

"Uh, it's been good," she answered nervously. Silverpelt was not sure if she should be telling Sagenose this. But he was a medicine cat, and if you can't trust them, who can you trust?

"I was made a warrior for saving Lonekit." She added.

The HollowClan cat gave her a piercing look. "From what?" Something in his voice made her hesitate.

"Darkmoon." Silverpelt whispered. "He's returned."

A mysterious shadow came over Sagenose's face. He answered in a low voice.

"Why don't you sit down and tell me about it? The Dark One is a serious, dangerous subject. Maybe I can shed some light on this

mystery."

Silverpelt sighed before settling down inside the medicine den. She told Sagenose about how she had seen the smoke, and warned Bramblestar. How she had fought Darkmoon and saved Lonekit. She ended with the log falling on her, but instead, remarked on how Singeclaw had saved her.

"Well," The medicine cat said. "That is quite the story. Reminds me of an experience I once had, but I digress. Now, shouldn't you be headed back to AppleClan? Wouldn't want them to think something happened."

Silverpelt nodded, rising. As she left the makeshift den, Sagenose called after her.

"And lets keep this discussion between us. Darkmoon has spies everywhere, you never know who you can trust."

The thought made her shiver, but nonetheless she walked back through the cold, snowy forest. The sun had begun to set, and she felt its warm rays slowly fade.

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Arriving back in AppleClan's camp, Silverpelt smiled at the sight of her clanmates going about their duties. Thornfur was scolding Haykit and Acornkit for wrestling by the fresh-kill pile. Skysong talked to a new cat, a rogue, they had taken in after he had almost died in the fire.

She padded into the warrior's den, looking for Singeclaw. He was nowhere to be found, probably on patrol.

Instead, her thoughts turned to her conversation with Sagenose, and she decided to ask Herbfeather some questions.

"Herbfeather?" She asked, entering the medicine den.

Looking up, the she-cat smiled. "Silverpelt! You delivered those herbs?"

She nodded. "Yes, but... I have a couple questions I wanted to ask you."

"Of course! I'm just finishing this poultice for Pebblepaw. He's been getting injuries out of nowhere."

Sitting down, Silverpelt began. "Do you know Sagenose?"

Herbfeather nodded. "Of course. All the medicine cats know each other. Did you talk to him?"

She nodded back. "Yes. I was wondering... Is there something happening with the medicine cats?"

Herbfeather's ears perked up, and Silverpelt was sure she took a quick gasp, but her head was turned and the moment passed.

"What makes you think that?" She asked, careful curiosity in her voice.

"Oh, just something Sagenose said." She responded casually. "I was just wondering if he was exaggerating. I don't know much about medicine cats."

Herbfeather turned, a look of understanding on her face. "Oh, I wouldn't worry about him. He likes to be quite mysterious sometimes. It can be annoying, actually."

There was certainly an annoyed look on her face, as if the thought of Sagenose made her want to roll her eyes. "Anyways, if you'll excuse me, I've got to give Pebblepaw his poultice. And I don't know if I've said it yet, but congratulations on becoming a warrior."

Padding out of the den, Herbfeather left Silverpelt alone to contemplate her words.

She was sure Herbfeather was right. After all, Sagenose was from HollowClan, and they always liked to shroud themselves in mystery.

Following Herbfeather out, Silverpelt breathed in the air.

Climbing a tree just outside the camp, she watched the setting sun as it moved towards the horizon.

It was beautiful.

:D. Anyways, I love the new medicine cat drama idk about you.

It's my birthday today 🎉🎉! … … … So that is cool. Hope you enjoyed, that's what really keeps me writing.

Next chapter Sunday!

Chapter Thirty-Four: Life

As the sun rose, Silverpelt still struggled to adjust to her new place as a warrior. Sleeping in the same den as Skysong and Thornfur felt weird, and though it was nice to nest next to Singeclaw, she still missed her siblings.

Berrypaw was just as excitable and buoyant as ever. She, thankfully, was happy for her sister, and took pride in her success.

Pebblepaw, meanwhile, was outraged. He saw no reason he should be kept in the apprentice's den if Silverpelt got to be a warrior. He slept badly, and never interacted with her beyond hate filled glares.

One day, she cornered him on a hunting patrol, an experience she was still getting used to doing without Skysong.

"What is your problem?" Silverpelt asked as Pebblepaw hissed at her menacingly.

"What's my problem? You!" He responded angrily. "You think you're better than us, better than *me*, just because you're a warrior now. You haven't earned it!"

She was taken aback by the venom in his voice. It was stunning for a cat she used to be so close with turn on her.

Anger boiled up inside Silverpelt. "You should be happy for me. I'm your sister! If this had happened to you, I would be ecstatic."

"Oh, please!" Pebblepaw spat. "If I had became a warrior, you wouldn't even congratulate me. You and Berrypaw have always

despised me, always ignored me. And I'm sick of it."

He stormed off, pawsteps rapidly crushing the plants beneath them. Silverpelt was at a loss for words or purpose. Slowly, she padded back to camp, head spinning.

Why is Pebblepaw so angry at me? She wondered. *It's not like I chose to become a warrior early. If I had a choice, I would have waited.*

Shaking off the feeling of self doubt ebbing away at her, Silverpelt felt a warmth spread across her pelt as she emerged into camp, met with the sight of the kits tumbling on the ground.

"Woah there, careful where you're rolling." She exclaimed as they knocked into her gently.

The three kits stopped there wrestle to stumble over to Silverpelt. "Silverpa- pelt!" They cried. "You haven't visited us in forever! Is it true you're a warrior now?"

She smiled to herself. "Yes, of course. You don't think you're parents would be lying to you?" She tilted her head suspiciously.

They gasped. "Of course not!" Acornkit said first. "But... you aren't supposed to be a warrior for another moon, right? What happened?"

"Well, I'm not altogether too sure, but I did save another kit; one from HollowClan."

"Wow, really!" Haykit said immediately. "What happened, what was it like?"

As she chuckled to herself, Silverpelt lowered herself down into a comfortable position, beginning the story of how she rescued Lonekit from Darkmoon's grasp, and once again she ran through the burning forest that day. She spoke to her father, and was reunited with her clanmates.

"...And so, after all of that, I finally found a second of peace. Shortly after, Bramblestar called for the ceremony, and I became Silverpelt, after my father." She finished with a grin.

The three had looks of kittish admiration and amazement on their faces.

"When I'm an apprentice, I'm going to save HollowClan and Bramblestar will make me a warrior on my first day!" Acornkit exclaimed, hopping in excitement.

But Silverpelt wasn't really paying attention. Singeclaw had trotted into camp, carrying a plump rabbit in his jaws. He placed it onto the fresh kill pile before padding away.

Haykit exchanged a knowing glance with her sister Bloomkit. "Do you like Singeclaw?" They said suddenly.

Silverpelt felt her pelt burn. "He's just a friend." She mumbled. The two sisters giggled.

"Not the way you look at him." Bloomkit added.

Suddenly, pawsteps filled the air as Silverpelt lifted her head, seeing Honeydrop approach them. She realized that young kits should hardly be wandering around camp.

"Bloomkit! Haykit! Acornkit! What do you think you are doing out of the nursery?!" The now towering queen looked fearsome.

As his sisters cowered beneath her gaze, Acornkit tried to stand unafraid. "We were just playing, mom!"

"Well, you will have to do it in the nursery. You three are not allowed to leave for the next moon!"

They groaned, marching single file back to the warmth and safety of the nursery. Honeydrop turned to Silverpelt. Suddenly, she had the feeling of having helped escaped convicts, and dipped her head slightly.

"Thank you for watching them," the she-cat said with a sigh. "Sometimes they can be such a pawful."

Silverpelt let out the breath she was holding in. "No problem." She responded. "They're such little bundles of joy."

Honeydrop flashed her a smile before joining her kits in the nursery. Silverpelt got up as well, taking a squirrel off the fresh kill pile and settling down nearby to eat.

Life is a curious thing, she thought. *One minute you can be arguing with the brother you've known since birth, the next telling some kits about saving a cat from another clan.*

Her thoughts drifted to Darkmoon, and Silverpelt knew this battle wasn't over. He wouldn't rest until he had control of every clan, and she felt responsible to stop him.

A couple days passed, and as leaf-bare turned to new-leaf, trees shook off their coats, patches of grass began to poke through the melting snow, and birds returned to the forest.

Soon enough, it was time for the gathering. Silverpelt hoped it would be a calm one.

"All cats old enough to catch their own prey, gather a round the High Tree for a Clan meeting!" Bramblestar yowled into the air. Cats gathered beneath her, awaiting for the leader to speak.

"As you know, the gathering is tonight. Hopefully, it will be a calm one. HollowClan will soon be out of our territory and back in theirs, and all will be right.

"However," the she-cat interrupted suddenly. "With the threat of Darkmoon looming, we as a clan should not get too comfortable. He is a dangerous adversary- I should know." She ended momentarily with a sigh.

Silverpelt turned her head in curiosity. Did Bramblestar know Darkmoon? Was that why she was so quick to believe her? Silverpelt shook the thoughts off and focused back on her leader.

"So, it is only fair we warn the other Clans. Whether they believe us or not, it is our duty to give them a warning. Failing to do so is just as bad as leaving them to their potential fate."

The crowd of cats discussed this among themselves. Eventually, they seemed to agree with Bramblestar.

"The cats going with me will be; Thornfur, Herbfeather, Skysong, Silentleaf, Morningfire, Silverpelt, Pebblepaw, Shinecloud, and Branchwing. We will leave in an hour."

She hopped off the High Tree, heading straight for Silverpelt. This startled her a little, but she remained sitting and waited.

"Silverpelt." The leader said. "I'd like to speak with you in my den."

Nodding, she slowly followed Bramblestar into the leader's den. What did she want? Did Silverpelt mess up on her first week or two of being a warrior? Was she going to go back to being an apprentice?

Arriving, Bramblestar sat down, and smiled at the look on Silverpelt's face. "There is nothing wrong. I just wanted to talk to you." She comforted.

Silverpelt breathed a sigh of relief. "What do you want to talk to me about, then?"

"I wanted to know if you've had any more visions; dreams, signs, anything. It is important to know as much as possible before this gathering."

She thought for a second. Silverpelt had had no further dreams or anything else important. It had actually started to concern her.

"No, not really. I haven't even been dreaming normally." She answered.

Bramblestar looked intrigued, but instead nodded. "Well, get ready for the gathering then. I want you to stay vigilant. Any signs that make you feel uneasy, make sure you tell me."

"I will, Bramblestar, I will."

How did this chapter pass 1300 words? I've been stuck on 800 for days! Hope you are having a good day, thanks for reading this far!

Uploads being reduced to every Saturday OOOHH NOOO. Why life why?!

Chapter Thirty-Five: Delirium

Padding next to Singeclaw, Silverpelt felt his warm pelt brush against hers as they made their way through the forest towards Four Trees. Even though he was not coming, he accompanied her halfway.

The moon was almost directly overhead, and night birds chirped in the treetops. The soft sound of dozens of paws swishing through the undergrowth or mumbled words were the only sounds that interrupted the forest's quiet demeanor. A small, babbling brook flowed out of sight, adding the peaceful air.

"This is as far as I go. I've got to head back to camp, don't have too much fun without me." He teased before turning around and walking back the way they had came.

Continuing on, the clan soon arrived at the clearing. EmberClan and MistClan already stood beneath the trees, unsurprising considering HollowClan now had the longest way to go. Scanning the crowd, Silverpelt quickly spotted Petalpaw talking to a MistClan cat.

As she padded up to them, Petalpaw turned to her and gave a pleasantly surprised smile.

"Silverpaw! How nice to see you. You've missed the last two gatherings, you know."

"I know, I'm sorry." Silverpelt apologized. "I've been quite, erm, busy."

The MistClan cat nodded his understanding. "You were the one fighting fires and saving that kit, right? That's so cool. I'm Featherpaw, by the way, MistClan's medicine cat apprentice."

Before Silverpelt could return the greeting, Petalpaw interrupted. "Featherpaw, this is Silverpaw. She's a worthy AppleClan apprentice."

"Actually, it's Silverpelt now." She correted, then realizing some context was needed, continued. "After I saved that kit, Bramblestar made me a warrior a moon early."

They both had a look of surprise on their face, but Petalpaw recovered first.

"Well congratulations! A moon early, wow. And I guess I should tell you I became a full medicine cat a little under two moons ago. I'm Petalthorn now." She said proudly.

"That's a bit of an aggressive name for a medicine cat." Silverpelt said, not unkindly but blunt nonetheless.

"All EmberClan cats must show their strength." A gruff voice behind Petalthorn said. An old EmberClan warrior glared at her before walking away.

Looking around, Silverpelt saw the leaders were gathering on the Great Rock.

"See you later!" She yelped abruptly to her two companions before rejoining her clan for the gathering. Sitting next to Branchwing, she perked her ears up as the crowd settled and the gathering truly began.

Brookstar stepped forward first. "MistClan had been doing well despite the cold weather, and though we lost Tailear to the fire, we have had two new kits, Reedkit and Beekit."

She stepped back, and up came Ravenstar. "HollowClan is recovering," He began. "though we are using an abandoned two leg nest temporarily as a camp, and have lost many cats, we still stand strong against any who may try to oppose us."

As he returned back to his place, Silverpelt frowned. No mention of AppleClan's help, after all this. Disappointing. Falconstar was up next.

"We welcome a new apprentice, Sandpaw. We remain steadfast and strong through all these hardships."That was it. Bramblestar's turn.

Silverpaw noted as the whole gathering of cats sat up as she stepped forward. It showed their respect for her.

"Once more, we meet. And once more, I come bearing grim news." The air tensed immeasurably. The look of cats' faces turned from interest to fear.

Yet Bramblestar continued. "I regret to inform you that once more we are plagued by a fearsome foe. Darkmoon has returned."

The tense silence stretched, and Silverpelt could see the shocked, unbelieving expressions on the older cats' faces, while the younger cats just looked confused or faintly scared at the name.

Brookstar stepped up. "What do you mean, Bramblestar? Darkmoon is dead. He rots in the Dark Forest. There is no way for him to return."

Many cats nodded with agreement at Brookstar's words. Silverpelt realized for the first time that Bramblestar was putting her full trust and belief in *her*. It made Silverpelt feel appreciated and trusted, but also made her feel responsible for the outcome.

"There are multiple cats who have seen him with their own eyes." Bramblestar continued. "Silverpelt has had multiple dreams. She fought him twice, and has survived to tell the tale."

More grumbles erupted from the crows. Many, especially EmberClan shot penetrating looks at Silverpelt. But not disbelieving. *They might be willing took believe,* she thought. *With some convincing.*

"I don't believe you." A voice on the rock said. Falconstar. "Darkmoon died a long time ago. He is but a nursery tale now. Dead

cats don't come back to life!"

Bramblestar glance at him, annoyed for once. "You are a young leader. If you won't believe me, I can't convince you. But you should reconsider. All four clans need to work together if we are to survive this. Ask the Elders."

The older cats nodded their heads in agreement at the words. Falconstar, surprisingly, backed down. He had a thoughtful look on his face.

Bramblestar turned back to the crowd. "I urge you all to tread carefully. Times are changing, and they must get worse before they get worse. We need to work together to survive. Divided, we fall."

Stepping down from the Great Rock, she returned to her clan. The gathered cats buzzed with conversation, and Silverpelt felt a sense of relief. It sounded like most were taking the warning seriously.

As clans gathered together and exited the clearing, she said a quick goodbye to a stunned Petalthorn before following her leader back to camp.

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The walk back was quiet. There was some small talk about what would have to be done in preperation, but for the most part, silence.

As the patrol approached the thick trees and bushes of camp, Silverpelt found Singeclaw waiting outside the tunnel. She padded up to him, curious as to what he was doing.

"Singeclaw? What are you doing up so late?" The tom jumped, startled slightly like he had been dozing. The rest of the patrol passed quietly.

"I was waiting for you to return." He said quietly. "I want to talk to you- privately."

His demeanor was grave as both tom and she-cat climbed

through the trees once more, silently arriving above the canopy. The sky was cloudless, and the moon shone bright.

"Silverpelt." He began. "I wanted to ask you something."

"What is it?" She responded curiously.

"Have... Have you ever thought about having kits? You know, finding a mate and everything?"

Silverpelt frowned slightly. In truth, she hadn't thought about it much. But when she did, it always ended up being she didn't know the right tom.

"I never really thought about it much," She said. Maybe with the right tom. Kits would be lovely."

Silverpelt could hear Singeclaw take a deep breath. She turned, and gazed into his deep, earthy brown eyes.

"Silverpelt. Will you..." He stumbled on his words, before finding the courage to continue. "Will you be my mate?"

Her whole world turned upside down in that moment. Her heart skipped a beat, head swam, and she almost fell from the tree. Singeclaw, *Singeclaw*, loved her. They had gone from worst enemies to possible lovers. All that time spent with Singeclaw, all the time sitting here, above the trees, with the stars. Silverpelt knew, in her heart, there was only one answer possible.

"...Yes."

A smile erupted onto Singeclaw's face. He grinned with relief and pure joy.

"I love you, Silverpelt, with all my heart. I'm sorry I was ever mean to you, I wish I could change some of the things I've done." He licked her muzzle affectionately.

"I love you too, Singeclaw. Don't dwell on the past, we still have the future. And with you, I know it will be fine." She took a breath. "Just... Lets keep this between us, okay? Our secret for now."

"Of course." He responded. "We'll tell them when we're ready."

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Duskpelt increased his pace. Branches flew past, trees became short brown blurs. He had not time to waste.

Approaching the cave, he did not slow down. Darting inside, he followed the dim light through deep tunnels, emerging into the stone room. A crystal lay in the middle, as big as a monster. It shined a vibrant sky blue.

Quickly, Duskpelt touched his nose to the cold stone and lay down, drowsiness overtaking him.

*

"Silverpelt." Her name came out of the surrounding gloom.

"Duskpelt?"

His faint form was made of black wisps, unable to form a solid or coherent figure. The look on his face was raw, true fear. Silverpelt had never seen that look on him before.

"Father, are you okay?" She inquired.

He ignored her concern. "Listen to me. Darkmoon is coming with far greater force. There will be no more second chances for you. StarClan has fallen, the shattered remains spread out and disorganized. I'm the only one who really cares anymore.

"His power will be far greater than you can imagine. I don't know how, all I have is a prophecy, a warning:

'The sun will darken,

He will arrive.

You must heed, so harken,

Or death will arise.

The four will divide,

Unless truth prevails.

For though stars brighten,

Beware, the moon pales.'"

Silverpelt felt chills run down her spine at the words, fear threatening her. But Duskpelt did not stop.

"Be careful, Silverpelt. I will not be there to help you. The next time we meet may well be in StarClan, and to stay. Promise me you will stay safe. Promise me."

The vision faded, and Duskpelt was gone. Terror coursed through her veins, and the look on her father's face burned its way into her memory.

No comment. What is there to say? Sooooooooo many things happened. Someone please stop me from doubling the word count somehow. I keep going over 1300!!

Hope your enjoying, if you somehow don't think there is enough drama just you wait for part 6!!! Why did I decide to organize them into parts...

I know this is a long note but I just wanted to say I formally apologize for these chapter lengths D:! I will be revising the book after it is finished (rewriting the first half dozen chapters) and polishing everything, so hopefully that will help!

Chapter 36 out Saturday!

Chapter Thirty-Six: Halcyon

Silverpelt lay in her nest, not sleeping, awake after a night of bad sleep. She had been having nightmares, and sleeping became near impossible.

Singeclaw slept peacefully beside her, his tail wrapped around her shoulders comfortingly. She smiled. Even in his sleep, he finds a way to be there for her.

It had been a quarter moon, seven days, since she had that dream. It still plagued her, her father's face still terrified her. She had never seen him like that before. He was always Duskpelt, calm and collected. Not scared and fearful. She shivered.

Silverpelt had told nobody. She didn't know why. It felt like something she had to find out for herself. It was ridiculous, and she knew she should tell Bramblestar, or Herbfeather. But something stopped her.

The prophecy was pretty simple, and some of it she could understand. But a lot still stood in mystery. There was much she still didn't understand.

Sighing, she spent the rest of the morning trying to figure out what "Beware the moon pales" and had nothing when a beam of the sun shot through the opening to the den. It was morning.

Shuffling to her paws, Silverpelt padded into the clearing. It was quiet as Thornfur came out of the den behind her.

"You're awake early." He said.

She nodded. "I couldn't sleep well."

The deputy gave her a knowing look before padding off towards the fresh kill pile. Silverpelt began another day of patrols and hunting.

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That night, she sat beside Singeclaw, sharing a vole before sleep. Laying together, Silverpelt was thankful she had him to lean on, that she had him to trust.

After taking a deep breath, she spoke. "Singeclaw. I need to tell you something."

He turned to look at her curiously, mouth filled. "What is it?'

" I... I had a dream a while ago. It was horrible." She shivered with the thought of it. The tom beside her looked at her with concern. "My father, Duskpelt, he... He gave me another prophecy. But this time, it wasn't the same. All the other times he has been calm and comforting, but this. This was different..."

Her voice trailed off. Her mind was still swirling, and the memory still burned painfully.

"Hey." She turned to look at him, tears in her eyes. "Listen. It's going to be okay. Nothing can hurt you here. You're safe."

Tears streamed, soaking her fur. As she cried, Silverpelt leaned against him, finding comfort in Singeclaw's warm fur.

A few minutes passed before she took a couple deeps breaths.

"You're right. I'm sorry. It's just... He was so broken. Sad and scared and helpless. It hurt to see him like that." The silence stretched as he let he process her thoughts.

"What was the prophecy? The warning?" He asked. Singeclaw knew it wouldn't be easy to think about, but it was important, and maybe part of her problem.

But a voice interrupted them. "Silverpelt, are you okay? You look horrible." It was Windwhisker.

"Yea, I just..." She took a breath. "I need to see Bramblestar. Where is she?"

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Soon enough, the two were settled in the leader's den. Bramblestar waspacing back and forth, Thornfur stood frozen, Singeclaw looked saddened, and Silverpelt was nervous. It was a sight.

"So you're telling me," The leader said. "You received yet another prophecy from Duskpelt. But this time he was acting weird... heartbroken and hopeless, you said?"

Silverpelt nodded.

"That doesn't sound like him." She heard Bramblestar mumble. Something clicked.

"You knew my father?" She asked suddenly. The she-cat stopped her pacing for a moment to answer.

"Yes, I knew him. Maybe not as well as I thought I did, but I knew him. He was a brave cat, very brave, but had his flaws like the rest of us." She added an extra remark, but Silverpelt didn't hear it.

"But to get back on topic, if Duskpelt is so, uh, *depressed*, this must be bad news. Very bad news. We will have to prepare."

She turned to Thornfur. "Go ahead and double patrols. Get some cats to reinforce the camp walls, and make sure our emergency stores are stocked.*

Since the first three disasters, they had begun to keep emergency stocks of supplies hidden away inside matching shelters. Even though AppleClan was the youngest clan, they sure weren't the dumbest.

The deputy nodded at his leader's words before exiting out of the den. She moved to Silverpelt.

"Thank you for telling me this. You could have sooner, but better late than never. Now go get some rest, it's late, but if anything else happens, tell me."

She gave a short nod to Singeclaw, who stood and walked over to Silverpelt.

"Come on, lets head to nest. You will need you're strength for tomorrow. " He added a wink before padding outside. Sighing, she followed.

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Brookstar stood looking over her clan's territory. Birds sang, the breeze blew gently, and the faint sound of the rushing river combined into one. It was peaceful. It was perfect. And it was about to be interrupted.

"Brookstar." A voice behind her said.

She turned. It was Dewstorm, her deputy. He had an anxious but determined look on his face. "Dewstorm, what is it? You look worried."

He smiled thinly. "A messenger from AppleClan just came in. Said it couldn't wait for the next gathering. He said his message was from Bramblestar."

Dewstorm stopped hesitantly, but a nod convinced him to continue. "She says Darkmoon is coming, and something about the sun and the moon. But it made no sense. All I could make out was darkening."

Brookstar looked at him curiously. "That's... Interesting. And probably not good. Bramblestar always has bad news."

The tom nods with agreement at her words before continuing. "And one last thing. She said we will all perish if truth does no prevail - whatever that means."

He waited a moment before turning and silently padding away. Brookstar was left alone

Thinking.

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The forest was deceptively peaceful. It gave Silverpelt the feeling of the calm before the storm. A bad storm.

But for the moment, she was safe outside the nursery, playing with the kits. It was calming, somehow, to see these little furballs play, carefree, oblivious to the potential danger they were in.

Singeclaw lay beside her, his warm pelt giving her something sturdy and strong to lean on.

Berrypaw was eagerly talking with Wildnose nearby. She and Pebblepaw had just taken their warrior assessments and were anxiously waiting Bramblestar 's verdict.

Speaking of Pebblepaw, he still avoided Silverpelt when he could, and hissed under his breath when he couldn't. It was saddening for Silverpelt to have her own brother turn against her.

Morningfire and Honeydrop lay enjoying the sunshine together while they had the chance. Their peaceful purrs sounded content.

Shinecloud listened intently as Sourfur related a very long and probably boring story to her.

Bramblestar felt separated from the rest, distant. She was in her den, as usual nowadays, pacing back and forth, or having a heated discussion with Thornfur.

Looking about the clan, Silverpelt felt a sense of peace and safety settle upon her. Whatever horrors awaited, whenever Darkmoon attacks, she wouldn't face them alone.

Her clan would always be there to help.

They were in this together.

What a happy way to end the chapter/part! Definitely not time to ruin it now heh heh heh heh. Hope you've enjoyed, that's my goal!

Being honest, I've gotten a bit uninspired to write, and at this point I'm just trying to get to the end. I still want to keep writing, but maybe not on a schedule.

Chapter thirty-seven and Part Six on Saturday!

Part 6 Cover Art

[image]

I just realized I forgot to publish this! Sorry, here you go, even though it's a bit late. Thank you for 300 views!

Chapter Thirty-Seven: Castaway

Lonekit sat, bruised and sopping wet. His bones ached from cold yet he had a triumphant gleam in his eyes. Coldscar stood over him, snarling softly.

"Lonekit!" He spat angrily. "How many times do I have to tell you? Stop going wandering out of camp. I've tried hard to make you feel welcome and appreciated, but you disrespect not only me but the whole clan!"

Lonekit knew this was a lie. Coldscar, the deputy, had hated him since the moment they met. He did not know, and really didn't care, why. He was just like the rest of them; nobody liked Lonekit. They all saw him as an outcast and loner.

What had made Coldscar so mad this time was the fact he had come back to camp with a plump rabbit in his jaws. He was technically a kit despite being more than six moons old, and was not allowed out.

The deputy's cold voice snapped him back to the present. "What do you have to say for yourself after sneaking out of camp?"

"I didn't sneak out if camp. I decided to go hunting, and anyways, I'm old enough to be an apprentice. I should be allowed to leave camp!"

Coldscar's eyes were blazing in anger. "You will respect Ravenstar's decision. Now get out if my sight if you know what's good for you!"

Angrily, Lonekit stormed off, seething. It was late at night, and most cats were asleep. He headed to the medicine den for some

herbs to put on his bruises.

Outside, he stopped. There were voices inside. Glancing around, Lonekit saw no one. Crouching at the entrance, he listened in.

"... will get Ravenstar to keep the clan in camp" He heard Sagenose say.

A new, unnervingly familiar voice spoke. "Good. I hope you won't fail me."

It sounded like, like... No. It couldn't be. That was impossible! How could he? How could Sagenose? And yet Lonekit was sure.

He turned to bolt for the entrance quickly, but not before hearing one last comment.

"And get rid of that kit for me. He escaped my claws in the fire, but not this time."

"Of course."

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Silverpelt smiled. She stood by her sister, happily awaiting the ceremony.

Berrypaw was finally going to become a warrior. She was practically bouncing off the camp boundaries from excitement. Silverpelt helped to calm her down and groom her pelt.

"I know you're excited, but stay still!" She said. "My sister can't go oup there looking like she just rolled through a thorn bush."

Berrypaw looked at her, annoyed. "It's just a little dirt, calm down. And besides, Pebblepaw is just as messy."

Silverpelt growled softly at her brother's name but said nothing.

Her ears perk at the sound of gathering cats outside, and turns to Berrypaw before padding out.

"Looks like it's starting, I'll see you out there." She said encouragingly.

Weaving through the gathering cats, Silverpelt finds Singeclaw near the front. Sitting beside him, he gives her an affectionate lick.

"Hey, not while everycat is here!" She hissed quietly at him. "We're supposed to be a secret, you know."

"Yea, but this is a big day, and..." He pauses for a moment. "I think we should tell them soon. We can't keep it secret forever."

Silverpelt sighed, but before she could respond, Bramblestar leapt onto the High Tree.

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around the High Tree for a clan meeting." The leader yowled into the air. The clan gathered around quickly, responding to the call.

"Today," she began, "we gather around to celebrate two of our apprentices, Berrypaw and Pebblepaw, becoming true AppleClan warriors."

The siblings stepped forward in the crowd. Berrypaw, predictably, was twitching with excitement, while Pebblepaw was much more serious and controlled. But something about him made Silverpelt shiver.

"I, Bramblestar of AppleClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down upon these apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as a warrior in their turn."

"Berrypaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code, and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do." The reply came shaky but certain.

"And do you, Pebblepaw, promise to uphold the warrior code,

and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?

There was a small moment of hesitancy in his eyes, like a small battle raged inside, eventually he responded. "I do."

Bramblestar hadn't missed the moment. "Then by the powers of StarClan I give you your warrior names. Berrypaw, from this moment you will be known as Berrytuft. StarClan honors your faith and loyalty and we welcome you as full warrior in AppleClan."

A quick round of cheers erupted from the watching cats, and Silverpelt joined in. Berrytuft had always been likable.

"Pebblepaw, from this moment on you will be known as Pebbleheart. StarClan honors your strength and dedication, and we welcome you as a full warrior in AppleClan."

Another round of cheers echoes, but this one sounded more forced than genuine. Silverpelt did not join in.

Both of the new warriors step up towards Bramblestar, and as they licked her shoulders, she rested her muzzle on each of them in turn.

Watching carefully, Silverpelt could see her whisper something to each, but there was no way to tell what. Her littermates turned back around and dispersed into the crowd, and the cats break the gathering, some stepping up to congratulate them, some going back to their tasks.

Silverpelt stumbled through her Clanmates to get to her sister. Berrytuft was talking to Branchwing, beaming. She turned as Silverpelt approached.

"It feels so weird to talk to warriors like an equal." Berrytuft said with a grin.

"What, I don't count?" She responded in mock hurt. "Congratulations, Berrytuft, you deserve it. And don't worry, you'll get used to it soon enough."

The sisters exchanged smiles before separating once more.

Silverpelt made her way back through the crowd. Passing by another group of cats, she could see Pebbleheart, talking with a few well wishers.

Her heart skipped a beat as she realized his condition. Scratches and scars covered his body, and a number of wounds could be seen. They were not big or blatant, but they were present.

As he turned to walk into the warrior's den, they locked eyes. Pebbleheart's were filled with sudden anger and contempt, while Silverpelt watched him, cool and collected. When he turned away, she noted his limp. Mysterious.

Before she could follow, a commotion behind her made her spin around. At the entrance to camp, a familiar form was being approached by the clan's warriors.

It was Lonekit.

Silverpelt quickly ran forward. Thornfur reached them first, however, and began interrogating the HollowClan cat.

"What are you doing here?" He began "Did Ravenstar send you? The forest isn't as safe as it once was."

"No..." The clearly exhausted tom explained. "I ran away from HollowClan. I need to talk... To Bramblestar. And Silverpelt."

Silverpelt padded up next to them. "Lonekit! Are you ok? You look horrible."

"Bring him in my den." Bramblestar had arrived. "The rest of you, go back to your duties. This one kit poses no threat, and comes as a friend." She addressed the watching cats. "...I hope."

No more words were spoken as Lonekit was helped into the leader's den. As Herbfeather treated his light wounds and gave him water, he explained.

"I had to run. Sagenose... He was planning to kill me." Lonekit grimaced as the medicine cat poked a sore spot. "I overheard him talking to someone, and it sounded like..."

His voice died out to a whisper. Silverpelt, Bramblestar, and Thornfur leaned in to listen.

"...it sounded like Darkmoon."

Silence echoed through the den.

"But that's impossible." Thornfur broke the quiet. "Sagenose wouldn't betray his clan. And even if he did, how could they be communicating? Darkmoon couldn't have gotten inside the camp."

Lonekit gave him an apologetic look. "I don't know, but I'm sure it was him. And Sagenose... He has always hated me. They all do."

Silverpelt thought back to her herb delivery. Sagenose had dismissed Lonekit with so much contempt and disgust it was saddening.

"So what does this mean for us? And why are you here?" Bramblestar asked the reasonable questions.

"Well, if Darkmoon has a spy in HollowClan, and a *medicine cat* of all things, then there could be spies in every clan." Lonekit paused to let that sink in. "And as for why I'm here, it's not just to warn you. I want to stay here."

He shuffled his paws awkwardly. "Before you say anything, I just want to say, this is the only place anyone has ever really been kind to me. I feel like I belong."

Silverpelt looked at her leader. Bramblestar and Thornfur exchanged glances. She held her breath. If Bramblestar didn't let him stay, she would just get her to change her mind.

"Of course you can stay. And don't worry, no harm will come to you. Herbfeather, I leave him in your care."

Silverpelt breathed a sigh of relied as the medicine cat nodded, helping Lonekit up and out of the den.

"Thank you, Bramblestar." He said over his shoulder. "I won't forget this."

Suddenly, the three of them were alone once more. Bramblestar paced the den for a minute before turning to Thornfur.

"We need to send another message to the clans. Tell them their could be spies and that if any more disasters occur, we will have an emergency meeting at Four Trees."

Thornfur nodded and left without a word.

She turned to Silverpelt. "Silverpelt, I need to you take care of Lonekit. You know him best, see if he has any more information but mostly just help him. He needs support, show him kindness."

Silverpelt nodded. "Of course, Bramblestar. And, by the way, thank you for letting him stay. He's a good cat."

Bramblestar said no more, and Silverpelt silently exited.

Ahhhh, I made it way too long again. I keep doing this. I will try my hardest to keep the next few shorte, but no promises!

Hope you enjoyed the chapter, took me forever to write.

Next chapter Saturday!

Chapter Thirty-Eight: Betrayal

It was a still night.

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Nocturnal birds flew about.

*

The wind whistled in the trees.

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Silverpelt shuffled in her nest.

No matter how she lay, something kept her awake. Her senses tingled, each one as sharp as a claw. Every stick poked into her like a thorn. Each insect could be felt crawling along her tail hairs. It was exasperating, but not in a tiring sort of way.

Her ears perked up as a new sound reached them. It was a scraping, nagging sort of sound. Silverpelt lay there, listening.

It came from a corner of the den, and as it floated through the air towards her, something else mixed with it. Soft hissing. Quite peculiar.

Unable to contain her curiosity, Silverpelt slowly rose from her nest and padded towards the noise.

A ball of light grey fur lay curled in the corner.

"Pebblepa- heart." She catches herself. "I thought you were supposed to be on vigil." A second later, she realized he is fast asleep. However, his teeth were bared in a snarl, and his paws had extended claws. Every couple seconds, his legs would move, and his

claws would scrape the ground.

Something felt off. Something felt wrong. There was something she needed to uncover, and it certainly wouldn't be good. But how?

Silverpelt racked her mind, trying to come up with a solution. An idea struck her. A ridiculous, outlandish idea. And she clung to it happily.

Leaving the den quietly, she softly padded towards the medicine den. It was a shame to wake Herbfeather, but she knew much more than Silverpelt ever could about dreams.

As she entered, she could see Lonekit lying in a nearby nest. He looked content, but underneath she felt the feeling of fear and terror.

Turning instead to Herbfeather, Silverpelt gently nudged her. "Herbfeather, wake up. I don't know how much time we have." The medicine cat mutters something in her sleep before her eyes open, and after a moment they concentrate on Silverpelt.

"Silverpelt," she says. "What do you need, so late at night? Why are you awake?" Worry was in her eyes.

"I, well, nothing is wrong, per say." Silverpelt answered, stumbling on her words. "But I need your help. I was wondering, if... You can get me into Pebbleheart's dream."

"..."

"What? Why...?" Herbfeather said, at a loss for words.

Silverpelt realised the absurdity of her request and motions for Herbfeather to follow her. They leave the medicine den and reenter the warrior's den. Walking over to Pebbleheart, she could see he still was dreaming.

"I have a... feeling. I don't know what it is or why, but I need to find out what is going on."

Herbfeather is silent as she watches Pebbleheart. Her face

remained expressionless. Then, she looked at Silverpelt with a nod.

"Alright. I don't know if it's even possible, but we'll try. Lay down next to him and get comfortable."

Silverpelt settled down on the den floor, curling up. Herbfeather had left, and now returned with some herbs.

"Take these." She said, dropping the herbs infront of her. "Chew them to paste then swallow. Think about Pebbleheart. Think of the best memories you have of him. And... Good luck."

Silverpelt nodded. Swallowing the herbs, she closed her eyes, resting her head down on the less than ideal floor. Sleep was difficult, but soon the herbs overcame her, and her last thought before darkness won was that Pebbleheart was a mouse-brain.

*

*

*

Silverpelt blinked her eyes open. She was surrounded by trees and grass, but it was nothing like anything she had ever seen.

They were half dead, half alive. It could be called a forest, but the trees were far enough apart to let through patches of light. The sky was oddly dark, and only after a couple moments did she realize it was starless. The land was oddly flat, but undergrowth, trees and bushes broke line of sight after a couple fox-lengths.

Getting up, she looked around. *Where am I supposed to go?* Sniffing the air, she detects a familiar scent, blurred through her unfamiliar surroundings. Taking off towards it, she quietly stalked through the forest.

There were no birds, mice, of other prey as she passed through the forest. All was quiet, but it gave her the feeling someone or something is watching.

Eventually, she reached her destination. Sounds of battle could

be heard and, emerging from a bush, she could see not far below her, two figures sparing.

Squinting, she could see Pebbleheart. He was fighting the other cat, somecat she didn't recognize.

Realizing this wasn't the time to be staring, she slowly made her way down. It was a small dip in the ground, steep on all sides except for a spiral path leading around the edges to the bottom.

This path was not concealed. If she wasn't careful, they would see her. All Silverpelt had to do was hug the cliff wall and she would be fine. Or so she told herself.

Taking a step forward, she silently padded downwards. Each pawstep lasted an eternity, each one carrying her closer and closer to what awaited her below.

Her heart raced as the bottom came into sight. Ducking behind a pile of rubble, she could see the two cats were focused on each other. Pebbleheart had inflicted many wounds on the other cat, and he seemed to be winning.

With a growl, he sprung at his opponent. The tom grimaced as he failed to dodge away in time and a new wound opened on his fore leg.

Smiling, Pebbleheart spoke. "Do you give up yet, Halfbone? You know Darkmoon, he wouldn't want me to injure you *too* badly."

Halfbone glares at him angrily but does nothing, knowing he is beaten.

"Speaking of Darkmoon, where is he?" He changes subjects. Silverpelt leaned forward to catch his words. "It's nearly time to-"

"Run."

The words came from behind her ear. A chill ran down her spine as she jumped instinctively forward. It was a mistake. She was too close to the edge, and Silverpelt fell off, only turning enough to catch a glimpse of a smiling Darkmoon before falling into the pit.

Landing on her feet, she looked back at him, hissing with rage. The drop was not far and she was not hurt. She was more annoyed he had been able to seek up on her.

"Darkmoon." She snarled into the air. Turning around, she stared into her brother's startled face.

"Pebbleheart." She nodded mockingly.

He looked angry, embarrassed, but above all, confused. "Silverpelt? What are you doing here? You're not supposed to..."

"To what? Know about your secret- That you're training with our enemy in the Dark Forest? Well guess what? I *do* know!"

A look of fear and guilt crossed his face, and he stepped backwards.

"Oh, I do love some good family drama." Darkmoon chimed in, laughing.

Silverpelt ignored him, instead saying, "Why, Pebbleheart? Why betray your clan? *Our* clan? What else have you been doing, what have you told him?"

"I never wanted to hurt anyone." He muttered to her. "It was an accident. Springleaf was never supposed to die..."

The world spun around Silverpelt. The weight and importance of his words struck her.

"You k-killed Springleaf!?" She managed to stutter.

Pebbleheart looked at her, anger in his eyes. "Of course not! I would never! How dare you even suggest that? It was an accident! Nocat was supposed to get hurt."

Silverpelt shook her head. "You monster. Look what you've done to the clan, to our family. You are not my brother." She looked away from him, at the starless sky, at the dark earthed ground.

"Well I hate to break the moment," Darkmoon interrupted. "But

we've got things to attend to. Pebbleheart, take care of her."

Silverpelt looked up at her brother's outraged face, a twinge of fear in her gaze.

...

And Pebbleheart leapt.

Oh yea. He just did that. That just happened. :O. Hope you enjoyed this chapter, it really helps to foreshadow the future ones- and I did it in under 1400 words! hooray!

Next chapter Saturday!

Chapter Thirty-Nine: Reprisal

Pebbleheart's powerful leap carried him above Silverpelt. Before she had time to move, he came back down, claws extended.

His claws bit into her back, and pain erupted through her. The shocked look on her face remained as she stumbled backwards. They crashed into the wall together, causing his grip to slacken. She used this opportunity to shake him off, but Pebbleheart managed to land on his paws, snarling.

Silverpelt steadied herself after his sudden attack. Darkmoon's harsh laugh rang throughout the pit, but she ignored it.

"Why, Pebbleheart?" She tried to reason with him through gathering tears. "We used to be such close siblings. What has he done to you?"

Pebbleheart took only a second before responding. "He talked to me, he appreciated me, when nobody else would."

His eyes darkened as he spoke, and Silverpelt saw a shadow of remorse in his gaze before it disappeared. "He was a father when we had none."

His words hit her like a two-leg monster. Duskpelt couldn't have been there for them, otherwise he would have. Right?

"Silverpelt, please. Join us. There is nothing for you in AppleClan. The Clans *will* fall, eventually. I don't want to have to hurt you."

Pebbleheart spoke in a low, ominous voice. She looked at him in shock and disbelief.

"I will never betray my Clan. You've failed everyone- Bramblestar, Silentleaf... Springleaf." Silverpelt shook her head as realization of her brother's actions hit her.

His eyes narrowed as he stepped forward again. "Then you have made your choice, sister!"

His lightning fast attack surprised her as his claws ripped a gash across her muzzle. Blood poured, but she was more concentrated on avoiding his second slash at her legs.

She leapt back, barely letting her hind legs touch the ground before lunging back forward, catching Pebbleheart off guard and rolling him.

They roll, claws unsheathed and teeth bared. Coming to a stop, Silverpelt ended on top. She battered at him, trying to get past his flailing paws and into his soft belly. Some cuts form, but he kicks up at her, sending her flying backwards as he got up, regaining his paws.

Pebbleheart growled as they circled each other, feeling each other's defenses, testing for weakness. Suddenly, he dashes forward again. Silverpelt dodges in anticipation, but no! He had only been faking it! The tom instead changed direction, barreling straight towards her, fangs first.

She barely flinched in time, and the teeth meant for her throat instead were buried in her shoulder. The pain was immense, but she managed to claw him in the side in return.

His jaws clamped down harder, causing a cry of pain to escape her. Panic began to fill Silverpelt, but she held her ground and remembered her training.

Instead of pulling, she lunged towards him. Pebbleheart was not expecting this and ended up on the pinned ground, surprised.

She stood snarling above him. Shaking off her shoulder wound,

she slashed at his belly for the second time. Gashes began to open as she clawed, and a faint look of fear came into his eyes. His gaze shifted from her to his chest, to something off to the side. His fear vanished.

Silverpelt felt a tinge of confusion, tilting her head, before feeling a hard thump as something slammed into her side. Something furry.

Looking up, she saw that cat, Halfbone. His face was plain and uninterested. Pebbleheart got up and walked forward, smiling as he went. She could hear Darkmoon's jovial laugh in the background at the sight.

"This is the end of the line, sister." Pebbleheart's voice floated to her in a silvery tone. "If you die here, you die in the living world too."

Silverpelt growled a deep, guttural growl. "Then I won't die."

He laughed. Lunging forward once again, he dug his claws into her again and again. Whenever she tried to fight back, Halfbone held her back. Fear crept back in. She couldn't die. Not again.

Blood poured, and Silverpelt's head began to swim. Her legs lost their strength, flailing uselessly. Her vision began to fade, and so did the pain. Everything turned black.

Even her brother.

*

She painted heavily. It was just a dream. Moonlight shone through the entrance to the den. The sounds of soft breathing surrounded her. She took a deep, calming breath.

And immediately cringed at the sudden pain.

Sitting up, Silverpelt could see Pebbleheart beside her, still asleep. She could see the wounds she inflicted upon him. And the ones she had suffered in return.

A sharp gasp makes her turn around. Her eyes widen at the sight

of Bramblestar, Herbfeather, and Morningfire all standing behind her.

"Silverpelt, what has happened? And how are you wounded? What's going on?" Silverpelt grimaced as her leader's shocked voice confronts her.

Her eyes darted to Herbfeather, then Pebbleheart's still sleeping form, then back to Bramblestar before she answered.

"Bramblestar, I... Pebbleheart betrayed us. He has been training with Darkmoon for days, maybe moons." Silverpelt ignored the pain she felt from her many wounds, not all physical. "We fought, but he had help. As you can see, I was in a rough spot before you awoke me."

Bramblestar and Morningfire exchanged worried looks. Herbfeather was rummaging through some herbs before presenting them to Silverpelt.

"Here, eat this. It will help numb the pain." She moved to apply a salve onto Silverpelt's wounds as well.

Bramblestar turned back to her. "One thing doesn't make sense. Why would he betray us? We're his clan, his family."

Silverpelt saddened as she remembered her brother's reasoning. "He said we were never there for him. He was bitter we never had a father growing up."

Despair filled her as she thought of her brother, once so loving and happy, now so spiteful and hate-filled.

Bramblestar said nothing, instead whispering to Morningfire. He nodded before leaving the den. The leader remained, letting out a loud yelp to awaken the rest of the den.

"Awake, my fellow warriors. Danger is at hand."

The den slowly wakes up, and Pebbleheart suddenly darted up, lunging for the entrance. He made it, only to be stopped by Morningfire, who was stationed outside.

Bramblestar turned to him. "Only the guilty run, Pebbleheart. Well, mostly the guilty." She nodded to Morningfire, and Silverpelt watched the look of horror and rage on Pebbleheart's face as he was dragged away.

He spat out one last sentence. "I'm not the only one hiding secrets!" Bramblestar ignored him.

A clan meeting was called, and Bramblestar explained the situation. She didn't know many details, but got the important parts quite easily.

"Pebbleheart has betrayed us to join Darkmoon. Right now, he's under guard in the hollow log." She pointed her tail towards a fallen trunk by the boundary wall. "For this betrayal, he will be renamed. From now on, he will be known as Greyfox. Let all beware his treachery."

A unanimous growl rose as they looked towards the log. The thought of a faithful warrior betraying their Clan stung, and it fueled their rage. Silentleaf stood by himself in the shadows, face unreadable.

"What will we do with him?" Wildnose's voice asked from the crowd. "I hate the thought of hurting him, but he's a traitor."

Bramblestar nodded solemnly. "We'll have to keep an eye on him. Maybe we can get some information about Darkmoon out of him."

Silverpelt suddenly felt old and tired as she listened to her Clanmates deciding her brother's punishment. *I wish it didn't have to be this way.* Herbfeather saw this and quickly hustled her away from the commotion and into the medicine den.

The rest of the day was spent laying in a soft nest in the medicine den, resting. Herbfeather frequently applied healing salves, herbs, and other healing aids.

Darkness had fallen once again by the time the news reached her.

Greyfox had escaped.

And now, he was out for revenge.

Wow! Fun chapter, even though it was a pain to write! I'm in the middle of preparing for my brother's wedding, that's part of why I've decreased uploads, but I'm still trying my best!

Forty out on Saturday!

Chapter Forty: Looming Darkness

Silverpelt woke early the next day. She lay in her nest, pondering the past day. It had been chaotic, heartbreaking, and frightening. The shock still clung to her.

Her brother, Pebbleheart... Was a traitor. A spy for Darkmoon. It crushed her. *What was that he said? I'm not the only one hiding secrets?*

Her thoughts were interrupted by Herbfeather, shuffling around the den, preparing a morning salve for Silverpelt.

"You're awake early." She said, gathering a small bundle. "How are you feeling?"

Silverpelt gave her a smile. "Good, strong. Do you think I can go out hunting?"

Herbfeather visually inspected her wounds.

"As long as you don't overdo yourself, and keep it short. But first let me put on these herbs."

Silence stretched as the medicine cat quietly prepared and applied a mixture of herbs onto her patient's wounds. It made Silverpelt cringe with pain but she held fast.

"Herbfeather..." A thought struck her. "Do you know what Peb-Greyfox meant by 'I'm not the only one hiding secrets'?"

Herbfeather's eyes flicked suddenly. Her soft smile faltered for a moment before she regained control, but Silverpelt had seen it. "Don't tell me, you know something. You've been... hiding

something?" She stared as the she-cat's eyes found the floor.

"Herbfeather, tell me I'm wrong." Silverpelt felt desperate. "What have you been hiding from us?"

Herbfeather looked at her incredulously. "I- I don't know what your talking about. I'm not hiding anything. The medicine cats-"

Silverpelt frowned. "So there *is* something going on with the medicine cats. Tell me what's going on. I can help. Like you helped me."

They sat there for a minute, looking at each other, Herbfeather's eyes filled with tears, Silverpelt's with worry.

"...It's about all the medicine cats." Her voice was weak and desperate. This was not the Herbfeather she knew so well. "We've... Lost our connection to StarClan. It happened right before the fire."

Herbfeather's face contorted in pain at the memories. "I felt StarClan urging me to listen to you when you warned me of the disease. And I had a faint idea the flood was coming. But after that... Nothing."

Silverpelt shuffled her feet uncomfortably, but Herbfeather continued. "And yet, somehow, they warned you. I don't know why or how, but you seem to be the only one left with a connection to StarClan."

At these words, she felt guiltier. Silverpelt knew she would have no more dreams from StarClan after her father had warned her of Darkmoon. No more warnings.

"Thank you for telling me this, Herbfeather. I don't plan o-"

Silverpelt stopped. Her eyes widened as she felt something evil begin to emerge.

Darkness.

Herbfeather stared at her, confused. "Silverpelt, are you oka-"

Dashing past the medicine cat, she ran out into the clearing. Looking up, she saw something no cat alive had.

There was the sun, sure. It hurt to look at.

But there was something else in the sky.

It was a weird, almost starry circle. It gleamed an odd silver in the sky, barely visible. One edge closest to the sun was thick black while the other edges were near impossible to see.

It was the moon.

*

Bramblestar heard a shout. Then rapid pawsteps. Then silence. Curious, she stood, slowly padding out of her den. Emerging into the clearing, she was surprised to see nearly the entire Clan gathered, staring up at the sky.

Following their gaze, she saw what they did. The moon hung in the sky next to the sun. I was an incredible sight.

The cats stood there for a good minute, all together staring up as the sky began to grow darker and darker.

Suddenly, all Dark Forest broke loose as cats scrambled about, panicked, terrified. It seemed like the world was ending, the sky darkened during the day, sun and moon stood next to each other in the heavens.

Silverpelt tried to push through the crowd in an attempt to reach Bramblestar, as she dashed up to Bramblestar. "Bramblestar, this is what Duskpelt warned us about. '*The sun will darken',* it all fits!"

The sincere calmness in her voice calmed Bramblestar. Though panic coursed through her and shadows of doubt ebbed away, she remained calm. Now was not the time for panic.

Then a small flicker of fear appeared as she struggled to remember the rest of the prophecy. "'*You must heed, so harken...*'"

"'... *Or death shall arise*.'" Silverpelt finished. They looked at each other before Bramblestar stepped forward, leaping onto the High Tree.

"My fellow Clanmates," she yelped into the air. "Do not be afraid! StarClan has warned us of this, and we must stand strong together."

Her speech drew the attention of the cats below her, and they gradually calmed as she continued to speak.

"We need to trust in each other, or we will all fall. Together, we can stand against anything. Know that the cats next to you are trusting you to stand by their side through the good and the bad."

Many still looked sceptical, worried and scared looks on their faces. A short silence stretched as the darkened sky hovered above them.

Suddenly, a single cat stepped out from the crowd, making Silverpelt smile. Skysong.

"Bramblestar is right," She said, addressing her Clanmates. "We rely upon each other, and will face this new danger, together." She turned to look at Bramblestar again, nodding.

The leader smiled at her briefly. "We will travel to Four Trees. The other clans will meet us there, and united we will stand against Darkmoon."

*

Overhead, the moon slowly slid towards the sun. Prey was quickly eaten or buried, kits were gathered, and the clan gathered at the entrance to camp. Silverpelt found Singeclaw helping Herbfeather grab some necessary herbs.

"Hey, do you two need help?" She asked. Herbfeather nodded.

"That would be great." She said, nudging a bundle towards her. "I'm going to need as many herbs as possible. I've got the feeling we'll need them."

Herbfeather tried to act natural, but Silverpelt could tell she was still strained from their confrontation. Singeclaw looked at her curiously, but she just gave him a quick smile.

They left together, and he gave her a curious look before asking, "Are you going to tell me what that was about? Herbfeather was certainly acting... Weird."

She stopped to contemplate her answer before saying, "Don't tell anycat about this. Just keep it between you and me."

Silverpelt checked to make sure nobody was listening in before whispering in a low, sober voice, "Herbfeather lost her connection to StarClan. All the medicine cats have."

Singeclaw's expression turned from curiosity to surprise to fear, all in a few seconds. "Are you sure? How is that possible?"

"I don't know." Her reply came quick but thoughtful. "But if I had to guess, it has something to do with Darkmoon. And that never ends well."

They walked in silence before reaching the rest of the clan gathered at the entrance. A minute later, they set off through the gap. Leaving their home, their territory, the safety of the camp boundary, the cats of AppleClan traveled together, from kits to elders, towards Four Trees.

Oh no, I wrote this one slightly slower than I wanted to! D:. We're getting closer to the final confrontation all the time! Shorter chapter, I know, but I feel like 1600+ words each was quite excessive, especially when I can write a long author's note like this and it adds a hundred words wow look at that amazing like magic this is a long sentence with no commas gasp.

Chapter Forty-One out Saturday!

Chapter Forty-One: Fangs

As they travel through the forest, one last peaceful moment could be savored together. The birds were still singing, the wind in the branches whistling a silky song, and the warm sun on their pelts.

But perfect things can't last. As the sky darkened gradually, the faces of the cats did as well. The magnitude and hopelessness of their situation began to set in, and only the kits continued talking.

Silverpelt tried her best to comfort those around her. She helped Honeydrop guide the kits, assisting them as they stumbled their way through bushes, around trees, and over rocks. It was heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time.

"Silverpelt, I'm tired." Haykit complained as she stumbled over a pebble. "How much longer? Where are we going?"

"Oh, Haykit, don't be annoying!" Acornkit interrupted. "This is exciting! We're exploring the forest before we're apprentices."

Silverpelt smiled as they continued squabbling. It reminded her of her own siblings, the old times when they all shared the same nest, with Springleaf.

Her smile slowly drooped as she thought of Springleaf. She hadn't thought of her mother in a while, a fact that startled Silverpelt to think of.

"...Silverpelt? Are you okay?" A small voice from below her startled her. Looking down, she could see Bloomkit staring up at her, a worried expression on her tiny face. "You look a little sad."

Silverpelt felt her mood being lightened by the little kit's concern. "Yes, I'm fine, Bloomkit. Don't worry about me."

Bloomkit nodded happily, padding to catch up with her siblings, leaving a hopeful Silverpelt in her wake.

*

As the Clan emerged at the edge of the forest, they approached Four Trees together. Silverpelt dropped Haykit, whom she had been carrying.

"What now? There is nocat else here." She heard Thornfur ask.

Bramblestar kept onto the Great Rock, addressing her clan. "AppleClan. We have finally arrived. Do not be worried, we have prepared here as meeting spot in case anything should happen. And, well, it has. So we will wait here until the other Clans arrive." Decisively, she sat down, showing her confidence.

Thornfur still had doubts. "And what if nobody shows up?"

Bramblestar wisely ignored him. The Clan slowly settled down to wait, beginning to gently talk in low voices together. A light pawstep next to Silverpelt made her turn.

Skysong approached her, smiling. "Silverpelt, how have you been? We haven't had a chance to talk in forever."

Silverpelt returned her smile happily. "Good! I've been quite busy." She let out a sigh. "It's weird to be a warrior now... Sleeping in the warrior's den, cats treating me like an equal, or even with respect."

A look of understanding was on Skysong's face. "I know what you mean. When I wa-"

"Skysong, there you are." They were interrupted by Thornfur. "Bramblestar wants to talk to you."

She nodded, flashing Silverpelt a smile before passing towards the Great Rock. The deputy turned to the she-cat.

"If you're just standing there, go join Singeclaw on watch duty." He said before following Skysong.

Rolling her eyes, Silverpelt wandered towards Singeclaw, who was at the edge of the clearing. Sitting down next to him, she nuzzled him playfully.

"So, how was the walk here? Did you get your exercise in?" She teased him.

Singeclaw smiled lazily at her. "The middle of a crisis, and you're still making jokes." He chuckled. "I just hope this all ends well..."

His gaze turned towards the distance. Silverpelt rolled her eyes but edged closer, resting her head on his pelt, closing her eyes happily.

It was a nice moment of peace.

And the last for a while.

The moment did not last long, however, as Singeclaw suddenly sat up straighter. Silverpelt got to her feet. Up ahead, coming out of the trees, HollowClan cats travelled towards them.

*

Minutes later, the four Clans all gathered below the Great Rock, leaders discussing above them. Overhead, the moon was nearly touching the the sun, and tempers were at an all time high.

"Bramblestar!" A loud voice rose above the rest. Falconstar. "Do you know what is happening?"

The crowd went silent, waiting for the leader's answer. Bramblestar was calm on the outside, but Silverpelt could tell she was struggling for an answer.

"One final prophecy has reached us from StarClan. When the sun darkens *he* will return, stronger than ever." She paused to look at him. "As you can guess, it's referring to Darkmoon."

Falconstar gave her a suspicious look. "We've heard rumors about AppleClan. You aren't as kind hearted as you seem." He sneered.

Whispers broke out among the crowd. The EmberClan leader grinned. "Trying to trick us, eh? Think we'll fall for your lies?"

"What in StarClan are you talking about?" Brookstar interrupted. "What rumors?"

"You've heard them! They imprisoned one of their own Clanmates just because their 'prophet' said so."

Small gasps could be heard in the crowd. It took Silverpelt a moment to realize who he was talking about. Greyfox.

"Falconstar, how could you doub-"

At that moment, the sky overhead flashed. As the gathering of scores of cats looked up, they could see the moon had finally touched the sun. It became a thick black on that end, and the sky ticked darker by the seconds.

"Look what has happened!" Bramblestar said, marching up to Falconstar. "You have wasted our time with your worthless bickering." A small snarl of threat lay under her words.

Surprised, he took several pawsteps backwards. Bramblestar continued to stalk towards him. It looked like a fight could break out at any moment.

Suddenly, Silverpelt felt something. Looking out across the clearing, she could see faint shadows in the unclear light. Squinting, she recognized cats moving about, gathering on the edge of the forest.

Leaping onto the High Rock, she turned before yelping to the entire clearing.

"While we stand here arguing and fighting, our real enemy gathers strength!" She pointed her tail towards the gathering of cats. They had moved out into the open clearing. There were close to a hundred.

"Either we can stand united, trusting in each other, or fall divided!"

At that moment, when everyone was staring, a single, pure black figure emerged from the army.

"I am Darkmoon, here to claim and conquer the living world! I will take my vengeance on all who opposed me and all who still do. Surrender now, and I might spare your lives."

The figure turned back, padding back into his horde of cats. The Clans were still in shock, cats scampering back and forth, or shaking with fear. Thankfully, Bramblestar had finally come to her senses.

"Well, you heard Silverpelt. Get ready for battle!" She hopped down before moving towards the enemy in preparation for battle.

Cats emulated her actions, one by one, until soon enough all four Clans were lining up together.

"Where is Sagenose?" Silverpelt heard Ravenstar ask "StarClan knows we are going to need him!"

"And Tulippaw. We are going to need medicine cats, even apprentices." Brookstar added.

She had no time to respond even if she did know. She was instead busy helping organize the Clans into a proper fighting force.

The odds were not in their favor. It was about sixty or seventy able-bodied warriors against Darkmoon's hundred. They were drastically outnumbered and out flanked. There was little hope for victory.

The two sides faced each other, battle ready, each cat staring their enemies down. Silverpelt knew every Clan cat here would be fighting for more than just their territory; they were fighting for their Clan, their family, their very lives.

As they stood their, the sky above them darkened as the moon covered more and more of the sun. It was as dark as fog, then as a den, then as a full moon.

Eventually, a yell to attack sounded out from across the clearing. Darkmoon's army moved forward as one massive horde.

"Forwards!" Bramblestar's shout rang out.

Silverpelt moved forwards with the others. As the two line rapidly closed the distance between them, her heart thumped faster and faster.

The Battle of the Eclipse had begun.

Dun, dun, DUUUUHHHHH!!!! Sorry haven't done that in a while! Epic battle but it isn't looking too good for our good guys there! Anyways I need to go to sleep it is 5:11 am and I have not slept yet, hope you enjoyed!

Forty-two out Saturday!

Chapter Forty-Two: Claws

The two massive groups of cats charged one another. The gap closed quickly, first a dozen fox lengths, then eight, then four, two, one, and finally they collided. Screeches of pain and anger rang out, the scent of fresh blood soon filling the air.

Silverpelt lunged at the first cat that charged at her, a small, ginger tom. She struck his shoulder, and her claws cut deep, tearing a gash into his flesh.

The tom retaliated, dashing left before leaping onto her back. Taking hold, he dug his claws in, trying to get his jaws around the scruff of her neck. Instead, Silverpelt simply fell backwards, using her weight to trap her opponent beneath her, the same move Windwhisker had used on her so long ago.

While he squirmed, she got her paws beneath her, pinning him down in place. He struggled to escape, and she used her teeth to tear out great clumps of fur from his pelt, trying to get past his long fur to the weak skin.

She managed to draw only a trickle of blood before she was shoved off by a second tom, this one bigger than her, pelt a sandy white.

"Get off him!" He yelled angrily. The two of them took fighting positions.

Silverpelt took a deep breath. She tried her best to remember back to her training. Skysong had taught her exactly what to do.

Darting forward, she feigned a swipe before biting in hard to the tom's vulnerable paw. She heard a satisfying crunch, but immediately let go, instead dashing backwards, avoiding the second

cat's claws.

She danced around them, turning once to claw a passing cat's shoulder before nimbly dodging her pursuers.

"Stand still, and maybe I won't pound you into crowfood!" One of them said in anger.

As the struggle, continued, Silverpelt could feel their attacks losing strength, getting sloppier and sloppier. As the bigger tom lunged once more, instead of running, she jumped high, arcing over his head and onto his back.

A look of surprise was on his face as he felt her claws tear into her back, trying in vain to throw her off. Holding tight, Silverpelt grabs a great big clump of fur and flesh, tearing a hole into his neck. He stops struggling, suddenly barely able to stand up.

"Brother! No!" The smaller tom meowed in sorrow. As his body hit the ground, Silverpelt jumped off, landing nearby and looking back.

The ginger feline stood nuzzling his bloody brother. One last breath, one last whisper could be heard before he breathed his last, dying in the paws of his brother.

Slowly, the cat looked up, a piercing gaze of rage in his eyes. Stepping over the body, he slowly closed in on the she-cat facing him.

The realization of what she had just done dawned on her. She had killed another cat. He was dead, and he wasn't even going to StarClan, either...

As she stood there, Silverpelt noticed that not all the cats had been faring as well. Outnumbered and surrounded, they fought as well as they could, but not well enough. One by one they fell, and it looked like a matter of time until Darkmoon claimed victory.

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"Duskpelt, we are running out of time. Cats are dying by the second."

He turned, looking at the cats hidden in the forest. Thirty of the bravest, strongest StarClan cats left from the battle between StarClan and the Dark Forest. All here to protect their descendants, their children, their children's children.

"StarClan!" He yelled. "Today, we fight for the lives of our loved ones, so they may have a longer life than we did. We fight to free this world of evil and maintain balance among the Clans. Darkmoon will pay for his crimes, and we will emerge victorious!"

The crowd of cats cheered heartily at his speech. Turning, he gave a twitch of his tail, and they all charged down the slight slope into the battle raging below them.

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Silverpelt sensed the tom, turning her attention back onto him just barely too late. He pinned her to the ground, hissing in her face.

"You'll pay for that." He snarled threateningly.

She struggled to escape his grasp, barely dodging the jaws aimed for her throat. She clawed at his belly, but the tom didn't even flinch, filled with rage and the thirst for revenge. Instead, he tore her shoulders, fur and blood pouring everywhere.

Silverpelt gave a gasp at the pain, unable to do anything. Desperately, she tried biting his paw, but only succeeded in receiving a hard cuff to the nose. The pained seemed to bring a numbness, and the world around her swam as her vision began to darken.

But suddenly, over the cries of injured cats, battle cries rang out across the clearing. Even her attacker turned, ears perked.

His expression of rage suddenly turned to surprise as another cat

hurled toward him. Silverpelt felt his weight relieved as he was sent spinning away, landing in an unmoving heap nearby.

Looking up, she saw possibly the happiest sight possible. Duskpelt stood there, gazing menacingly around, as if daring a cat to come near.

"Duskpelt!" She yelped, struggling to her paws. "You're here, really here!"

The tom's attention immediately switched to her as they embraced. "Of course. Somecat has to look out for you."

Tears flowed as father and daughter reunited. Eventually, they broke apart. "Come on," Duskpelt meowed, "they've pushed us back to the Great Rock."

The duo raced through the battlefield, passing bodies, stepping over pools of blood. The fighting had recentered around Four Trees, and both sides prepared for a final push, ready to give their remaining strength in an effort to win in a final charge. The sky had completely darkened to near pitch black. The sun was completely covered, and darkness reigned.

"Duskpelt, Silverpelt!" A voice shouts. Turning, they see Bramblestar padding quickly towards them through the fighting cats, fur matted with blood.

"Thank StarClan you came with backup, it was beginning to look hopeless." She said. "We're pushing them back, just keep fighting. They could use some help on the Great Rock." Turning, the leader leaped back into the battle, falling quickly out of sight

Quickly, Duskpelt made his way through the battle, Silverpelt close behind. Her shoulders burned, and the small scratched began to sting, but she ignored them.

They leapt onto the Great Rock, now able to see the entire battlefield. It was clear the sides were very evenly matched, but with StarClan's warriors, Darkmoon's army began to get pushed back, fighting with their last reserves of strength.

Silverpelt turned back to the fight in front of her. She leapt onto a brown she-cat who had their back turned, digging her claws deep into her back. The cat let out a screech, violently throwing her off before running away from the battle and back into the trees.

A yelp of pain warned her that her father was in danger. Turning, she saw Halfbone, the cat from the dream, a moment before he pounced, pinning Duskpelt down. Silverpelt saw his claw fall in slow motion, saw it slash across the tom's face. Blood spurted from the washing wound, and Duskpelt meowed in deep pain.

Silverpelt felt anger boil within her at the sight. She had just regained her father; she was not about to lose him again. Duskpelt managed to kick the tom off with his hind legs, and Silverpelt gave him no respite, instead leaping straight into him.

They rolled to the edge of the Great Rock, a flash of fear stunning her as she realized just how far the drop actually was on this side. Then the fear turned to horror as they tipped over the side, falling as one heap.

The ground stretched up to meet them before landing not only with a thud, but a resounding *crack!* as many of Halfbone's bones snapped in half.

Getting up slowly, Silverpelt took a deep breath. She hadn't been injured much as the tom had taken most of the impact force. Looking up, she began making her way back to the top, leaving Halfbone's body behind.

A small groan made her stop, however. He struggled to move, squirming on the ground for a moment before speaking.

"Don't leave me to die. I never meant any of this, it's all Darkmoon's fault, all his fault..."

Silverpelt closed her eyes, trying to ignore his cries of help. She continued making her way back up, knowing there was nothing she could do to save him.

"Please... I'm actually your father, you know- oh, that won't

work..." Halfbone scoffed at himself, only to be cut off by dying coughs.

Slowly, his body stopped moving as he breathed his last.

Silverpelt reached the top after a small climb. Looking around, she was surprised to see the Clan cats cheering. Darkmoon's army was retreating, the cats running away, disorganized, fleeing for their lives. They all headed into the forest where they came.

All but one.

Standing in the middle of the open field, Darkmoon stood in the open. Alone, abandoned by his warriors, it was him against the world.

So MuCh DeAtH aNd DeStRuCtIoN! Almost at the end, only two chapters and the epilogue! This has genuinely been so cool to write and such a good learning experience that I cannot wait to move on to something else after a bit of a break!

Chapter 43 out Saturday!

Chapter Forty-Three: Hearts

The crowd of cats took a second to realize they had won. A tense moment passed, as if they dared not hope to believe the truth. Then, as one, a cheer rang out, all five Clans glad to finally be free of threat.

The celebration, however, was short lived as cats began to realize Darkmoon still remained. He stood in the middle between Four Trees and the surrounding forest.

Silverpelt listened on the Great Rock as a wave of whispers raced through the crowd, and while some were busy helping the wounded or comforting each other, many stared at the dark fured tom slowly approaching, a look of irrational rage and fury in his eyes.

She looked around for Bramblestar, Duskpelt, anycat who could take command and finally rid the world of Darkmoon. But none stepped forward.

"I came here to take my revenge." Darkmoon said, snarling. "If I can't, I'll take down as many of you with me as possible!"

Looking down, her gaze swept over the gathered cats. Her eyes landed on her father, one eye slashed and bleeding, being tended by Herbfeather. He was in no condition to fight. Bramblestar was nowhere to be seen and, one by one picking them out over the

crowd, Silverpelt could see the other leaders made no move to do anything. Even Falconstar stood, horrified and unmoving.

The sight made Darkmoon laugh. Nocat was brave enough to challenge him. They all stood, petrified at the thought of fighting him alone. *They are all cowards!* He thought. *None dare fight me!*

Unfortunately for him, one cat did dare. That cat slowly padded forward through the crowd, stepping out into the clearing. Silverpelt, for the cat was her, stood defiant. No others dared to join in. They all just stared, watching.

Darkmoon roared with laughter. This one, measly she-cat playing prophet who he had defeated multiple times already dared to face him. He grinned at the thought of being able to get his revenge. After that, maybe dying wouldn't be so bad.

Silverpelt continued forward, standing to face her opponent. She stopped a small distance away, probably six or seven fox lengths, and stopped.

A quiet hush fell on the crowd behind her as her claws extended once again, fur bristling. All her training with Skysong, all her practice with Singeclaw and Berrytuft played in her mind. Every time she was injured, each scratch on her pelt burned. The moons of life surrounded by chaos and hardships, good times and bad, swirled in her mind.

It all seemed so long ago.

Silverpelt would not let those days go forgotten, would not let her good memories be replaced with bad. Her entire life has been shadowed by the looming threat of the cat in front of her.

All there was left to do was strike.

Giving a small grunt of pain, she stepped forward again, doing her best to shake off her injuries. Darkmoon watched, surprised at the sight of an injured and tired Silverpelt preparing to fight.

"Do you really think you can defeat me?" He meowed, amused. "I'm going to enjoy killing the cat who ruined all my plans. Revenge

tastes sweet."

His words made Silverpelt shiver slightly, the ominous tone echoing through her ears. The black fured cat padded forwards, baring his teeth ferociously. Silverpelt watched him, realizing not only was he the better fighter, but she was injured while his coat was spotless.

Her pulse quickened at each step he took. Her paws felt heavy, and the thought of his claws made her shiver. Nevertheless, she took a battle stance, watching her opponent approach.

He stopped a couple fox-lengths away, smiling. Then suddenly, faster that she could react, he leapt. It was a great bound, impressive in its own right but the speed was unmatched. His entire weight came crashing down, terrifyingly mighty, pure hatred and spite in his eyes.

Time seemed to freeze in that moment. Silverpelt felt the world spin around her, and the image of Darkmoon if he won the battle, won the war. Bodies of cats she knew so well, AppleClan or not, strewn about.

It was not something she would let happen.

In a split second decision, Silverpelt dashed forwards, claws flashing. Hot blood poured over her body, and she felt numb, unaware of what had fully happened.

Trembling, she realized her ear was ringing, and it felt like it had almost been torn off. Spinning back around, she saw Darkmoon was also stationary. Pain was etched across his face, and he grasped at his chest for a minute. Blood spurted from a long, gashing wound, but he quickly turned, snarling at her.

"You'll pay for that with blood." He growled angrily, stalking forwards. Instead on lunging, however, he charged straight at Silverpelt, smashing his bulky weight into her.

Silverpelt was caught by surprise. His whole body slammed into her, and she flew backwards, rolling to stop. Before she could stand

back up, Darkmoon pounced, pinning her down to the grassy ground. Struggling to push him off, she felt his claws cut and scratch at her belly, waves of pain reaching her.

Taking advantage of his aggression, she managed to free one leg and shove him off, delivering a clean cut on his shoulder at the same time. Standing up, she dodged an incoming slash before biting his paw as it flew past her. She heard a crunch, and Darkmoon yelped in pain before cuffing her in return, limping backwards slightly to readjust.

They begin to circle each other, the final confrontation beginning. Darkmoon was limping, and Silverpelt's head swirled. She had to stay focused. One mistake was the difference between life and death, one mistake the only thing between her and StarClan. And after that...

They both lunged forward, colliding midair and falling back to the ground. Claws, fangs and tails flew, new wounds opening, fur being torn apart. Silverpelt fought for her life, struggling against the bigger and stronger tom.

Eventually, his paw hit her injured ear. Pain shot through her head, and the world turned black for a few seconds. She felt her body fall helplessly to the ground, unable to stand.

Opening her eyes again, she saw Darkmoon standing above her, one paw holding her down. A look of triumph and victory was on his face, smiling down at her, completely at his mercy.

"Ah, look how you have fallen." He snarled in her ear. "Forsaken by your Clanmates, abandoned by all you hold dear. A shame, really. You would have been a great warrior under my guidance."

He turned his gaze to the crowd watching, horrified. "Your hero has been defeated. She was foolish enough to challenge me, and she has paid the price. Either you submit to me, or I'll have to kill you all, one by one."

He let out an evil chuckle. "I'll tell Pebbleheart you send your regards." He meowed menacingly. A fit of coughing overtook him,

and Silverpelt smiled at the pain she had caused him.

In the end, she had failed. They won the battle, sure, but with Darkmoon still alive, he would regroup his army, and probably win next time. It was only a matter of time until his victory, all because she had failed.

Silverpelt's life flashed before her eyes, images of her clan, Singeclaw, Skysong, Berrytuft... She hoped they would be safe but, deep down, she knew they wouldn't be. She knew Darkmoon would stop at nothing to hunt each and every one of them down.

Then something snapped, and Silverpelt realized she couldn't let that happen.

With a sudden surge of strength, and with Darkmoon's clawslashing down to end her, she instead leapt up, jaws open wide, fangs reaching upwards for his exposed throat. As he struggled to maintain balance after this unexpected surprise, her fangs sank into the soft fur of his neck.

A look of surprise flashed across his face and, for the first time, fear. His eyes flicked to hers as he tried to speak, but his efforts were in vain as the life left them, his body falling limp to the ground.

As he finally died, Silverpelt whispered into his ear a final sentence.

"This time, you aren't going to the Dark Forest."

Turning, she raised her head to look at the crowd of cats watching. Many stood shocked, still staring, still exhausted by the day's fighting. Some walked towards her, but there were only three that mattered. Singeclaw limped toward her, one leg lifted off the ground. Berrytuft was running forward, struggling to breath but ecstatic. Herbfeather padded closer, herbs clenched in her mouth, eyes relieved and jubilant.

Behind her, Skysong lay at the edge of Four Trees, unable to get up but watching, listening.

And smiling.

No words. No words to describe this chapter d:. Absolute cinema. Or maybe I'm just overating myself. But at least it's finally over! Just one more chapter and the epilogue and we're done (With this book😉)

Chapter Forty-Four out Saturday.

Chapter Forty-Four: Peace

Overhead, the sky was bright once more. The moon could no longer be seen, and the sun shone down pleasantly at them all once again, uncovered and displaying its brilliance.

All four Clans still stood in the clearing of four trees together. The StarClan cats had left after the battle, carrying any wounded and disappearing back into the trees after a few minutes. Silverpelt saw each talking and embracing with their descendants, and only now did she truly realize they had already *died*.

She did not have the chance to talk to Duskpelt again, as her father had been among the most wounded despite having been tended to by Herbfeather.

"He will live," The medicine cathad said, "Especially once he is back in StarClan. And don't worry, Silverpelt, you'll see him again. One day."

Silverpelt had nodded, wincing as Herbfeather treated her many injuries. Darkmoon had taken his toll, and she was not unscathed.

As soon as she had realized the battle was over, she felt relieved. All the fighting, all the death would stop, and no more cats needed to give their lives.

StarClan was safe, and so were they. The four Clans had been united in a way, and the Dark Forest cats were hopelessly defeated. Silverpelt felt like the future was bright, and it made her smile.

But presently, the leaders once again joined together on the Great Rock. Below them, cats did not bother to organize themselves in any way. They sat down where they were and listened.

Bramblestar was laying, her hind leg nearly ripped open, being held together by cobwebs. Her pelt was covered with scratches, gashes and bruises. The other leaders looked similar, though none as injured as her.

A second glance told Silverpelt that Ravenstar was missing. His deputy, Blackbreeze, stood in his place. She could only assume the worst.

"Today we have won a costly victory." Bramblestar began, struggling to speak loudly for all to hear. "Many have given their lives for us to be standing here. Do not to let their sacrifice be in vain."

The leader shuffled backwards, sighing slightly. Everywhere Silverpelt looked, she could see emotions. Sadness, despair, loss, but also joy, hope, and relief. Singeclaw, who was sitting next to her, pelts brushing, smiled comfortingly at her.

Brookstar and Falconstar had been talking quietly together, but as Bramblestar finished, they stepped forwards.

"I've just learned Rosewing was killed in the battle." Falconstar began, frowning. "She was a good medicine cat, and neither her contributions nor anycat else's will be in vain. Petalthorn will take over her role, and EmberClan will rebuild, stronger than before."

Soft cheering, mostly from EmberClan cats, met his small speech. Brookstar waited for the noise to die down before beginning.

"Today has been a day to be remembered for moons to come. I look forward to the future where we can stand together as we have today. I mourn for those who have died here, may their spirits find their was to StarClan."

There was a moment of silence as those present thought about their fallen clanmates. Silverpelt sadly wondered how many of hers fell during the battle. The thoughtful silence soon turned to expectancy as Blackbreeze stepped up.

"One cat that gave their last remaining lives in this battle was

Ravenstar. He fought bravely, taking multiple enemy cats with him." The deputy spoke with an air of admiration. "We will never forget his sacrifice. As usual, I will take his place as leader of HollowClan."

Cats murmured their displeasure at the news, but Blackbreeze was not done. "Additionally, I regret to inform you all that our medicine cat, Sagenose, joined Darkmoon's side during the battle. He unfortunately escaped, but rest assured we will find him. HollowClan wishes you all good luck in the moons to come. May StarClan guide your path."

And just like that, it was over. Thornfur reappeared, directing AppleClan to various tasks. Silverpelt saw some helping the injured, while others picked up kits. With a troubled start, she saw Windwhisker carrying a motionless body.

Turning, she caught Petalthorn's eye as she padded away with the rest of her clan. There was a sad look on her face, but also something else. Determination.

Running to catch up, Silverpelt fell into step besides Berrytuft. Her sister gave her a wide smile, but oddly stayed silent. There was a troubled look on her face, mixed with the triumph of the battle.

"Is something wrong?" Silverpelt said, worried. "The last time you were this quiet was when- well, never."

She saw a glimmer of amusement in her sister's eye for a moment before she turned serious again. "Nothing, it's just that... I've missed when the three of us used to play in the nursery together." She trailed off, tears threatening her eyes.

"I miss those days, too. But now that this is all over, maybe we can go back to those peaceful times." Silverpelt shot her sister a hopeful glance. "And who knows? Maybe Greyfox will come back to AppleClan one day."

"I hope so." Berrytuft answered, huffing. "But at least we still have each other."

The two continued to walk together in silence. The patrol of cats was somewhat subdued, but there was an underlying sense of peace. Soon enough, they reached camp. It was just the way they had left it, though by now the sun was setting, casting a orange-yellow glow across the tree tops.

Bramblestar didn't even bother to try getting on the High Rock. "Everycat, get some rest. It's been a long day, and we can hunt and eat tomorrow. Herbfeather, if you could tend to wounds I would appreciate it."

Silverpelt let out a relieved sigh. Her bones were aching, her wounds burned, and her brain felt like mush. But then she remembered something.

"But what about Lonekit?" She asked, stepping forward. "Will he remain here, after Sagenose has been driven out?"

All eyes turned to the tom, who shuffled his paws uncomfortably.

Bramblestar tilted her head thoughtfully. *He did fight well. And HollowClan still might not want him back. Even if they did, they would treat him just as bad as before.* She felt like there was only one option, but she had to make sure.

"What would you like, Lonekit? If you stayed here, you would be welcomed by all as an apprentice. If you left, you would go back to your home Clan, with those you grew up knowing." Her eyes narrowed as he contemplated.

Silverpelt looked nervously at the cat she had saved, at the cost of her own life. They made eye contact for just a second before he looked away. She silently begged StarClan to let him stay.

"I want to stay here, Bramblestar." Silverpelt smiled with relief. "This is my new home, and nothing from my past will change that."

Small cheers broke out as Bramblestar nodded her acceptance, smiling at the tom. Cats were about to disperse into their dens, until the leader broke in with one final sentence.

"Your mentor will be Silverpelt, and from this day on you will be

called Heartpaw. I know you will prove your worth and loyalty to the clan soon, and I look forward to the day you become a warrior."

Even bigger cheers echoed through Silverpelt's head, but it was too busy to register them. Padding over to Heartpaw, they touched noses, and she whispered into his ear.

"I was proud to have saved you, but not any more than I am now." She mumbled. Heartpaw's eyes flashed with amusement and sincere joy before they broke up, being congratulated by their fellow Clanmates.

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Silverpelt lay on the soft moss bed, taking deep breaths and fighting the urge to let go. Beside her, Herbfeather and Singeclaw stood. Herbfeather was busy liking the newly born kits, avoiding Singeclaw's desperate eyes.

"Y-You're going to be okay, Silverpelt... We'll make it through." He stammered.

Except, she wouldn't. Silverpelt knew that. It was finally time to

reunite with Duskpelt and Springleaf. She had a wonderful life, and though it had dark spots, there was nothing she regretted. Skysong was her friend, she always shared prey with Berrytuft, and not a day went by without Singeclaw by her side. Hearttail even still admired her.

Herbfeather broke in. "They will live. Two she-cats, one tom. All three healthy kits."

Singeclaw looked at them sadly, as if they reminded him of a bad day or old wound. But mixed with his sadness was newfound determination. "What should we name them?" He whispered to Silverpelt.

..."The orange one is Dawnkit." She responded in a low, painful voice. "The black tom is Nightkit. You name the third."

His eyes filled with tears for a moment before he wiped them away. "She will be Fernkit."

Silverpelt looked at him, content with one, final glance. "It's a beautiful name." She said, resting her head again and closing her eyes.

"Goodbye, my love." Singeclaw's voice in her ear said. "See you in StarClan."

And, slipping away, she was finally at peace.

Ahhh, it's finally over! Hope you all enjoyed the book, genuinely! Sad ending, but I felt like it fit well. Don't worry, there is still the epilogue left, and also I'll be talking about the next books I'm writing, so don't leave quite yet!

Epilogue out Saturday!

Epilogue

Pleasant sunshine shone down upon the clearing, basking it in a warm light. The singular beech tree spread its leaves overhead, casting a spot of cool, refreshing shade beneath it.

A familiar, seemingly endless plain of grass stretched into the horizon. The only sound came from a single bird singing in the tree, and a cool wind whistling through the branches. Only the smell of a pleasant summer day reached Silverpelt's nose.

Laying in the shade, she lifted her head off her paws. It was peaceful here, like a calm meadow during a warm spring day. She had been here multiple times already. It was where she first met Darkmoon, where Duskpelt had told her she had died.

But weirdly enough, those memories didn't bring her pain or anxiety. She only felt a faint displeasure, like a bad smell reached her nose. Instead, she thought about all the good times she had. Playing with her littermates, training with Skysong, building a relationship with Singeclaw, becoming friends with Haykit, Bloomkit, Acornkit, and, more recently, training Hearttail and learning that she was going to have kits.

It was riddled with tough challenges and dark times, but in the end it was all she could ask for.

Snapping back to the present, Silverpelt sees two familiar ghostly forms bounding towards her across the grass. Standing up to meet them, she smiles warmly at Duskpelt and Springleaf as they return the smile.

"Oh, Silverpelt, I missed you." Springleaf said, licking her cheek affectionately. "I'm sorry I couldn't be there for you through it all. It was my time."

"It's fine, Springleaf, really." Silverpelt responded happily. "It worked out in the end."

Turning to Duskpelt, she realized he had been watching their exchange contentedly. His fur was no longer scratched and bloody from the battle, but his right eye was cut closed nonetheless.

"I'm glad you made it here safely." He began, smiling. "But more importantly, that you did so many good things in your life. I'm proud of you."

And those four words meant more to Silverpelt then the entire world. Tears wetting her fur, they embraced, together in StarClan at last.

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"Singeclaw, can you tell us the story again?" Nightkit whined.

The four of them were in the nursery. Berrytuft lay nearby, as she had agreed to nurse her sister's kits after she had died. The feline broke in now.

"You mean the one about Silverpelt?" She asked.

"Yea! Why did our mom get named after a constellation?" Dawnkit agreed.

Singeclaw chuckled, amused. "Well as you know, it was your mother who saved countless lives in the Four Perils, and it was her who ended up killing Darkmoon in the end.

"She could do all this because of her connection to her father, your grandfather, in StarClan. The Clans had, and still have, countless days of peace and harmony due to her bravery and courage. So, after she died, we all agreed to name a specific constellation of stars, the biggest one, after her.

"Ever since then," Singeclaw finished, "We've called it Silverpelt in her memory. And hopefully we will continue to for moons to come."

Fernkit was looking at Singeclaw, mystified no matter how many times it was told. Nightkit was deep in thought, gazing at the stary sky outside. Dawnkit, admittedly, was already playing with a moss ball, but thoughts of their mother and her past swirled in all three of their minds.

And Singeclaw was content with that.

Author's Note

Wow, this has been quite a journey! I'm half glad it's over, but also feel disappointed there is nothing else to write. Story building is complicated!

If you didn't know, this is my first fan fiction. Accordingly, you can noticeably see how the first half dozen chapters are less good than the later ones. I'll be re-writing the first half dozen because my conscious won't let me go, but otherwise this book is done!

Thank you for reading all the way through, I genuinely hope you've enjoyed, it's 7:15 in the morning and I've only slept like five hours. I'm planning on writing more for those who want it (Which admittedly is probably just me), so make sure to follow me if you want to get notified for that.

Make sure you have a good rest of your day and prioritize sleep! Trust me I've made that mistake enough on this book!

More Books!

Hey! It's the author again (crazy I know). If you enjoyed the book and would like to read more from me (which will hopefully be better) here is a up-to-date list of my current books, those I'm writing, and some ideas I have!

Complete ✓:

Thunderfalls - Warrior Cats

In progress🖋:

The Gifted Curse - Warrior Cats: When two siblings join the strongest Clan around, they are woefully unaware of their pasts. Unfortunately for them, their past is catching up. And it brings a gift no-one wants.

Unforgiven - Warrior Cats Ultimate Tale: Based on a WCUE role play on Roblox. A warrior tries to save his leader's life, only to be saved himself. He is used like a pawn, forced to watch as his desire to repay that debt is twisted to tear his clan down around him.

Ideas/Concepts□:

World of Moss - Warrior Cats: After catastrophic event, the surviving cats of the four Clans must either band together to survive or end up alone in this new world. Mosskit is in the middle of it all.

Thunderfalls Prequel: You read this book, you can probably guess!

Thunderfalls Sequel: No plot right now so who knows?

Past Times - Warrior Cats: When (enter MC name here) loses his/her memory he/she has to traverse not only their clan, but their very personality and character itself. WIP name btw.

If you want to be notified when I post any of these as well as when I update them make sure to follow me. Oh and if you'd favorite/share the book that also helps :D.

Now actually have a good rest of your day!